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CAPTAIN SEA WAIF, THE PRIVATEER.

BY NED BUNTLINE.



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BY NED BUNTLINE,
AUTHOR OF "THAYENDANEGEA," "THE WHITE
WIZARD," "THE RED WARRIOR," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"I'd like to know your history, Captain Seawaif—I'd like very much to know your history, sir! I think I've a right to sir—a right, you understand. And if there is any one thing which I stick out for more peremptorily than another, it is right, sir—right! That is why I, Phineas Cringle, merchant, *et-cet-e-ra, et-cet-e-ra*, am an open and avowed patriot, sir. Old England is wrong, and Young America is right. Therefore, I'm with her. You are a young man, yet you come so well recommended to me as a skillful seaman, a fearless man and an honest one, withal, that I like you, though you're not so rough in the figure-head as good sea-dogs generally are. I have given you command of the 'Tyranicide,' as good a craft as floats on salt water—well manned, well officered, well armed, *et-cet-e-ra—et-cet-e-ra*; and I know that she'll be well commanded. But your history, sir, your history!"

"At present, I have no history worth listening to, Mr. Cringle; but I will try to write one with my sword which all the world can read!"

The conversation with which I open this story occurred at about the time of the commencement of that revolution which gave freedom to the United Colonies of America, in the store of the first speaker, Mr. Phineas Cringle, "merchant, *et-cet-e-ra*," as he always called himself.

He was a curious, but a good old man—very eccentric in his ways, but as sound at heart as a young, unshaken oak. His age was full sixty, and his long, natural hair was white as snow, and hung in masses down about his neck; but his close-shaven face was as smooth and as rosy almost as that of Kate Cringle, his blooming and beautiful daughter, who was just eighteen. His eyes, too, were bright and laughing, almost too much for a business man—which he was, in the strictest sense.

Mr. Cringle's short, thick-set figure was dressed in a claret, shad-bellied coat, buff waistcoat, long—according to the then fashion—knee-breeches, (claret, like his coat), white cotton long hose, with immense silver buckles in his shoes. Upon his head he wore the tri-cornered continental hat of the day, with a red white and blue cockade placed so conspicuously on it, that all who looked might see that he did not fear to wear the sign of a patriot American.

The person whom he spoke to was a young man, probably twenty-five years of age—a person with a pale and student-like face, a face expressive of intellect, but sad-looking, though well featured. His eyes were large, dark blue, and shaded by long, brown lashes; his flowing hair and soft, glossy beard (which never had known the contaminating touch of a razor) was of a rich, dark brown; his figure was slight, yet very graceful; his entire appearance quiet, and exceedingly genteel. But when his eye looked upon you, there was a something in its cold, clear depth—a something in the expression of his curved lip, that told you, that when manhood was needed, he was there, in spite of the delicacy of his appearance. His dress was a naval frock-coat, with epaulet straps upon the shoulders, plain pantaloons and boots, and a blue naval cap. He wore no weapons there—yet he looked like one who could wear a sword gracefully, and use it skillfully.

"You can at least tell me where you was born, sir!" said Mr. Cringle, pursuing his object. "You must excuse my curiosity—in a natural failing of mine; from my childhood up, I have always been a seeker into the history of everything and its why, and wherefore. I have no distinct recollection of it, but I have no doubt that, while I was yet a suckling in my mother's arms, I instituted a philosophical research into the nature of milk; and as I grow older, I get more and more curious!"

"I cannot tell where I was born, or even where my father or mother was," replied the young captain. "As my name indicates, I am literally a waif of the sea. Drifted ashore from a wreck upon a little island at the southwest corner of Nantucket Shoal, I was taken from a chest into which I had been laid by the hands of a noble and good old man who had

left the world to live a hermit life there. He named me Edward Seawaif—the first name his own; the latter, in remembrance of the manner in which I came to him. Though dead bodies and vast quantities of goods also drifted ashore from the wreck, no living thing but myself reached the land. That good old man, Edward Zerk, was more than father or mother to me—he hated a world which had wronged him much; but he loved me all the more that I had seen nothing of it. To him I owe my education, everything, and more than all, the armor of his experience—bought advice, which makes me avoid the wolves and perils which wronged and wrecked him?"

"You had no history, you said, sir? No history, indeed!" cried Mr. Cringle. "Why, sir, already you are a hero of romance. I must find out who your father and mother were, *et-cet-e-ra, et-cet-e-ra*! Was there nothing beside you in the chest, when the good old man found you?"

"Yes, sir—a Bible, a quantity of clothing and jewels—son of it evidently belonging to a lady of rank and fashion; for it was rich and costly. The rest was just such clothing as an infant like I would need—for I was probably not over ten or twelve months old."

"Any name in the Bible, on the jewelry or clothing, *et-cet-e-ra*?"

"No, sir, none—except a crest and coat-of-arms that were on a seal ring, and also engraved on various articles of jewelry which I still possess; for when the good old hermit died, he begged me through all vicissitudes, to keep them—in hopes that eventually they might lead to the discovery of my family."

"Yes, he was right—very right. What was this crest and coat-of-arms?" asked the merchant, taking out a pencil and note-book.

"Two arms and hands grasping crossed swords over a coronet, formed the crest—a shield, with diamonds and *fleur de lis* formed the coat-of-arms."

"Umph—noble blood: the *fleur de lis* is French, or was once!" said the old merchant, writing in his memorandum-book. "I've got something to do—I'll find out who your parents were or are (for they may yet be living), if I have to hunt over the heraldry of all the world. But, come up stairs, captain, we'll take a glass of punch of daughter Kate's brewing; and then we'll go aboard of the 'Tyranicide,' and see how matters go there. I suppose you'll go to sea with the ebb in the morning—the tide turns at eight, to a minute!"

"Yes, sir," said Seawaif, following the merchant to the dwelling part of his house, which was in the upper part of his store and warehouse—a thing very common in those days.

CHAPTER II.

"Isn't she a beauty? Taut and neat aloft, trim and saucy below, *et-cet-e-ra*!" said Mr. Cringle, as he and the young captain stood upon the wharf, and looked at a craft which lay at anchor in the little harbor.

She was, for that era, astonishingly clipperish, raking in spars, sharp in hull, and calculated to carry an astonishing quantity of canvas. Her rig was that of a two-top-sail schooner—her lower masts being very long and heavy, so as to carry large fore-and-aft sails on a wind, and square-sail, top-sail, top-gallant and royal yards above, to set the square canvas when the helm was put up, and she eased off with flowing sheets before it. Her tonnage appeared, from a glance at her size, to be about three hundred tons. She was pierced for eight twenty-four pound carronades on a side; and a long brass thirty-two pounder, working on a pivot, shone bright as gold between her masts, mounted high enough to work above her hammock nettings. Around her masts could be seen the gleam of boarding-pikes and battle-axes. At her main-mast head a blood-red flag floated out, bearing the motto: "Death to Tyrants and their Tools!" At the fore-truck, another red flag bore the name of the schooner—"THE TYRANNICIDE." Her figure-head was a serpent striking its fangs into the heart of a man who wore a crown. Taking her altogether, she was indeed a saucy and dangerous-looking craft, calculated to both sail and fight well. Upon her deck many men could be seen, showing that, if she had "teeth," she had also strength to use them.

The young captain did not reply to the proud owner's remarks, but, with an equally exulting eye, looked at the handsome vessel,

while a boat which he had signaled rapidly approached the shore.

It was surf-built, pulled by eight sturdy young men, and an officer, also young, but a bold and handsome boy, steered her. In a few moments, she was at the pier. The young officer touched his hat, and said:

"If you please, Captain Seawaif, you had better hasten aboard."

"Why, Mr. Morley, what is the matter there?" asked the captain, as he and Mr. Cringle sprung into the boat, which was immediately pushed off, and started toward the schooner.

"The surgeon, sir, Dr. La Motte, has had a quarrel with Mr. Doolittle, the first officer, sir, and has challenged him to a duel. I believe they were getting arms to settle the matter when I left, sir."

"Ah! quarreling already? I'll give them a chance to fight our country's foes, not her friends, *son!*" said Captain Seawaif. "Give way with a will, men," he added, to those at the oars; "put me along side in a hurry—I hear the clash of steel!"

"Can you inform me, my young friend, what they quarreled about, *et-cet-e-ra*?" asked Mr. Cringle, coolly, of Mr. Morley.

"Something about frogs, I believe, sir. I was not, however, present when the quarrel commenced," replied the young officer.

The worthy merchant had not time for further questioning, for the boat had reached the schooner's gangway.

The captain scarcely touched the man-ropes which were extended by the side-boys, but leaped over the side, with a frown on his pale brow, and an angry light in his dark eye.

And he came just in time; for one of the combatants, his first officer, was tremendously hard pressed by his opponent, who, using a long, slim rapier of matchless steel with consummate skill, was far superior to the other, who had the short, curved cutlass, much used by seamen at that day. While the amazed, yet amused crew of the vessel looked on, the Frenchman had made lunge after lunge at the officer, making remarks at each lunge, which brought shouts of laughter from the men.

"Ah, ha! Monsieur Do-lectle; I make you do *somiesing* now, eh?" he would cry, as he made a lunge, which the officer, standing solely on the defensive, barely succeeded in parrying. "How you like ze frog-stickare, in ze hands of ze frog-eatare, eh?" he would add, as his keen blade, doubling over the stiff one of his adversary, narrowly escaped a sheath in the bosom of the latter.

"Hold here, hold!" cried Seawaif, sternly, as he stepped between the combatants, who instantly lowered the points of their weapons. "What means this breach of discipline in officers, and upon my quarter-deck, which should and shall be as inviolate as a church to all who belong upon it!"

The attitude and look of the combatants at this instant was worthy the notice of any artist. The Frenchman, who was very lean and tall, had cast off, not only his cap, but his wig, leaving his perfectly bald head exposed. He was in his shirt-sleeves, also, and wore the tightest kind of black breeches and stockings, making his very active, but diminutive legs look even smaller than they were. His moustache, which was thick and heavy, was twisted ferociously over toward each ear, which it nearly touched.

Mr. Doolittle was equally long and lank; but he wore a seaman's loose trousers, which, though they fitted at the waist in spider-like tightness, spread out Turkishly below, and there concealed the slender shanks of bone and skin. His loose shirt, bulging out above his slim waist, gave an idea that there was an expansion of chest and body there; but in vain had the rapier of Doctor La Motte, in several passages through the garment, sought for more solid material than cotton shirting. His face was smooth, and his long, straight hair seemed to have been plastered to his cheeks with tallow, or some other such substance, of its own dirty-white color.

"What means this quarrel? Speak, gentlemen, I will permit no trifling here!"

"I guess it wouldn't have been a *trifle*, if the doctor had run his tarnal toad-sticker through my gizzard!" said Mr. Doolittle. "But, cap'n, I reckon I was in the wrong! The doctor ordered some fried frogs on the table, and I said I'd rather eat stewed kittens. He twitted me about eating pork and molasses, and I talked back rather saucy; and he wanted to fight, and I accommodated him. That's all sir—I'm the one to blame!"

"No, Monsieur Doolittle, 'scuse me if you shall please—you are *tout genereuse*. I, sare, am ze shentilhomme zat is to blame. Monsieur le Capitaine, I shall make one grande apology to your quarter-deck—*tres grande* to Monsieur Doolittle, and more zan zat to you, sare! I vil make once more frents wiz Monsieur Doolittle; and if at any time he have a shot in ze leg, or ze arm, I vill take zem off as easy as pull a toot!"

"Thank ye; I hope you'll not have any chance for such operations," said the officer; "but here's my hand, and if the cap'n will only excuse us this time, we'll drown malice in a noggin of old New England, and be as fast friends as ever."

"Eh! bien—zat is one grande idea, Monsieur Doolittle. I nevere shall observe if you eat pork wiz molasses any more," said La Motte, grasping the extended hand.

"And you may eat frogs till you croak, doctor, before I find fault with you again," said the naturally good-hearted mate.

The captain smiled, and went down into the cabin with Mr. Cringle; whither, after the doctor had recovered his wig, cap, and coat, they were followed by him and Mr. Doolittle.

"Gentlemen, this has been the first difficulty on board; let it be the last, and it shall be excused," said the young commander, as he poured out a glass of wine. "Misconduct in an officer will ever be more severely punished by me than in a man before the mast; for from the former I expect and shall exact exemplary conduct, which the men can respect and follow. Save your strength and your steel for America's foes—I will soon place you where you'll have work enough to do with them."

"Eh bien, I sall be excessively delight ven zat day shall arrive. My instruments are all ready for ze amputat, ze ball-extract, ze every-sing," cried the doctor, rolling up his sleeves—as if a subject for operation lay before him, instead of a glass of wine.

"The sooner we're away, and at work a makin' somethin', the better I'll be pleased," said Mr. Doolittle. "They do say there's a powerful sight o' transports and the like a crossin' over, and their cargoes must be worth a mint o' money to our government folks 'tist now, when powder, and lead, and shootin'-tools are so scarce!"

"We will sail as soon as ebb-tide makes in the morning, sir," said the captain. "You had better take another pull at the lower rigging, the laniards may have stretched some. Also, set up the stays once more; our spars are heavy, and will strain them in a sea-way. See that everything is ready for sea, below and aloft."

"Ay, ay, sir—this is the best news that I've heard in a coon's age! And the men are just as impatient as I am."

"It is well; I look to you to see that all things are ready—nothing forgotten. I shall now go on shore with Mr. Cringle to receive his last orders. Send a boat for me to the pier at ten to-night, precisely."

"Ay, ay, sir!" replied the officer.

"Can I do anything for you on shore, doctor?" inquired the captain.

"Nossing, sare—nossing, I sank you. Ah! pardon me—zeze is one sing I 'ave forgot. I vish, sare, if you please, two or tree pound of enuff, ze Mackaboy, for tickle my nose. I 'ave forgot him."

Promising not to forget that most necessary dirt-powder for the excitable doctor, the captain entered the boat, which had been ordered to be ready, and with Mr. Cringle was rowed to the pier, from which they both returned to the store.

CHAPTER III.

It was early morning. The red sun had just come up out of the Atlantic, and now brightened the slightly-rippled waters of Salem harbor. The sails of the "Tyrannicide" had been loosed, her cable hove short, and she only waited for the change of tide to have her sails sheeted home, her anchor hove up to the bows, and her cruise would be commenced.

All of her boats had been hoisted but that which the captain used as his gig, and her officers, excepting him only, were watching the tide very impatiently for its change. He had been summoned to the shore by a signal from the flag-staff over Mr. Cringle's store, very soon after daylight, much to his surprise—for he had, as he supposed, received his final directions when he parted with Mr. Cringle the night before.

When he reached the store, the merchant met him, and said: "Go up stairs to Kate, my dear captain, she has got some errand for you. I tried to find out, but she would only tell you; and so I had to send for you—for women will have their way, or there's trouble brewing, *et-cet-e-ra, et-cet-e-ra!*"

The captain, who was in a hurry to return to his vessel, hastened up stairs into the parlor, where Miss Kate Cringle waited for him.

She was not what might strictly be termed a *very* handsome girl, but yet was pretty. She had a fine, plump, well-shaped figure, her hair was a glossy brown, almost black; her eyes of a bright hazel—at times laughing and full of light, then liquid with deep and true womanly feeling; her features very good and her complexion as clear red and white as a pink in full bloom.

There was no lack of strong, bold intellect in her expression; but she was modest almost to a fault—if modesty *could* be faulty; for her blushes came and went like the flushes of the Aurora Borealis across a pale northern sky.

"Your good father said that you wished to see me, lady," said Seawaif, as he stood before her, actually blushing as much as she did—for a brave man is often timid before a lady; or, fops, fools, and cowards are apt to be "brave" in woman's presence, where danger only exists in her love-darting eyes. Such as they are protected by shields of brass, while true men go there with open hearts and naked breasts.

"Yes, sir," said Kate, while her eyes were downcast, not with shame, but modesty. "You are about to leave us on an expedition where death will be hovering above, below, and all around you, and I could not sleep all the night for thinking of it; and so I spent my wakeful hours in making for you a little token which might remind you, when far away, that there was one here who would pray for your safety, watch for your safe return, and tremble at every storm-cloud that appears."

Thus saying, she produced a small, white, silken banner, upon which was worked, in rich gold embroidery, the identical coat of arms which he had described to her father on the day before.

"Forgive me," she said, as she saw with what surprise he looked upon the work. "I did not mean to play the spy; but accidentally yesterday, I overheard the sad story which you told to my father—for I was in his counting-room, copying some invoices for him, as I frequently do. And it remained in such full possession of my mind, that I could not rest; and so I made this little banner, not as a flag to use in battle, but as a token of remembrance from one who feels a deep interest in your success and happiness."

She ceased to speak, and timidly raised her eyes to his, as she handed him the pretty flag.

"I thank you, lady," said Seawaif, while his voice trembled with emotion. "I am grateful for your kindness, which I shall not forget."

And he took the little flag, and placed it in his bosom, next to his heart; and, after pressing her small, white hand to his lips, said:

"Excuse me that I do not tarry—my sails are loose, the anchor almost apeak, and the tide will serve by the time I can get back to my vessel. Heaven bless you, and adieu!"

He was gone. And the pretty maiden stood and looked at the hand on which he had printed his last burning kiss—a salute, it is true, of respect only—looked at it as if the kiss had left a visible impression, a sign which she could look upon for all time when she thought of him. And a still, soft sigh came up from her heart, seeming to linger on her red, sweet lips, as if loth to part with them. She stood thus dreamily, until she heard the sound of men cheering; and then she went to the window, which fronted toward the harbor, and saw that the "Tyrannicide" was under way.

CHAPTER IV.

When Seawaif left the presence of fair Kate Cringle, he met her father, who accompanied him down to his boat, in vain trying to find out what Kate had wanted him for, "*et-cet-e-ra*"—but it was no use—he was "a stupid pump," and could not raise anything from such deep water.

The young captain sprung into his boat amid the murmured good wishes of hundreds of citizens who had gathered there to see the privateer go to sea, and in a few moments he was on board of his vessel.

With a clear, bugle-like voice, which needed

no trumpet, the young commander shouted.

"Man the capstan bars, lads, and run the anchor up with a will. Stand by the jib and flying-jib halliards—lay the head yards aback!"

His orders were obeyed readily; and in a few moments, the second officer, who stood on the fore-castle looking over the bows, cried:

"She's broken ground, sir!"

"Very well, sir—run up the jib and flying-jib, and haul the sheets to starboard—man the top-gallant and top-sail sheets and halliards! Round with the capstan, men, and run the anchor up to the bows!"

A moment later, and the head-sails up, the veering bow of the schooner proved her to be all away, and then came the order:

"Sheet home, and hoist away top-sail and top-gallant sails!"

This was done; and as the fore-and-aft sails, already up, filled, the schooner began to gather headway. Then, as she fell off before the wind, which was fair out of the harbor, her square sails filled, and she shot ahead with increased velocity. The crowd on shore looking with delight upon the splendid vessel, and gladdened, too, at the thought of her errand, rent the air with cheers; while Mr. Cringle, taking upon himself the part of gunner, fired an impromptu salute from a single gun, which was kept upon the wharf to be used as a warning-signal if the British approached to burn the town—as had by them been more than once threatened.

The "Tyrannicide" replied to this by a salute of seventeen guns—her whole compliment—which, having harbor-loads, without shot, were thus scaled by Seawaif, preparatory to the reception of service charges.

"That's what I call a darned waste o' powder!" said a pinch-faced, dried-up anatomy of a man, whose thread-bare clothes, little eyes, and long, greedy talons of fingers, spoke the miser out and out.

"It isn't *your* powder, Moses Gelson," said Mr. Cringle, rather sharply. "If it was, it wouldn't be likely to be in a vessel destined to fight for liberty!"

"Tush—tush! What is this 'liberty' to us?—the war is ruining trade, and soon we'll all be as poor as rats!" said the miser, pettishly.

"It is a pity that such mean curses as you *weren't* poor; you're too stingy to live! Not satisfied with begrudging the really poor the very crusts they eat, you must growl at what a man who is well off chooses to do for his country. If you only had your due, you'd get a good ducking in a horse-pond!" cried Mr. Cringle, so angrily and so loudly, that his words were heard by the crowd, and probably found echo in their hearts; for they instantly shouted:

"Let's duck the old miser—to the goose-pond with the old tory!"

And seizing the terrified wretch, they dragged him roughly toward a pond of muddy water near the residence of the merchant, and soon would have put their intention into execution, had not Kate Cringle, who saw their actions, stepped out upon the balcony, and cried out, in a clear, musical voice, which reached every ear:

"Shame men—*shame!* to treat an old man so. He is weak and helpless; let him go, and save your strength for a nobler purpose!"

Her timely appeal and her beauty—for in her excitement she really looked handsome—had the desired effect; and the old miser was released, much to his own gratification, and rather to the disgust and anger of her father, who would have been really glad to have seen old Gelson get a lesson—for he hated him heartily, not only for his lack of patriotism, but his miserly meanness, which was so proverbial in the place, that any man who did a dirty or stingy action was called one of "Gelson's babes"—though the old man had never wedded.

"I'll remember her—I'll remember that girl, bless her!" muttered the old miser, as he hobbled away from the crowd as fast as he could—not stopping until he reached his own residence, which was also a kind of a store-house, in which a vast variety of all kinds of truck and trash were stowed—old junk, second-hand anchors, sails, cordage, fishing tackle, nets, harpoons, and a thousand other things.

A large and fierce-looking dog was chained near the door as a sentinel; and lying asleep on a bale of rags was a one-legged, one-eyed negro, whom the miser roused with a kick, as he entered.

"What are you sleeping at this time o' day

for, Jim, you lazy imp?" growled the old man. "Cause I'm sleepy, Massa Gelson—guess you'd be sleepy, if you had as much runnin' of er-ands and work-in' as you make me do!"

"Tush!—You've only one eye to sleep with, and only need half as much as folks with two eyes!"

"Don't I? Den you see I've only got one leg, and oughtn't to do but half as much goin' about as folks that's got two legs!" said the darkey, opening his mouth from ear to ear, and showing two reefs of ivory, as he laughed at his own wit.

"Tush—one of your legs is a wooden one, and can't get tired!" said the miser. "Take these three pence, here, and go to the market, and buy meat for us and the dog!" he added, with a sigh, and a sad look at the departing three pence.

"For the dog and us—for he gets the most of it," said the negro, in a low tone, as he took the money, and stumped away upon his errand.

"It costs a dreadful sight to live!" sighed the miser, as soon as he was alone. "Three pence a day for meat, and two pence for bread!" And he sighed as if his heart was breaking.

CHAPTER V.

Never was a craft in better trim on deck, below, or aloft, than the Privateer, after Seawaif had got her rigging stretched, her new sails fairly filled, and her crew properly stationed, and he had been a few days at sea. Until this was done, he had dodged up along the coast of Maine, among the islands, through many an intricate channel—with which, however, he was perfectly acquainted. But now, conscious that he was ready to meet any foe of his tonnage and weight of metal, he boldly headed off from the coast for the inward-bound vessels from England.

One morning soon after, he was at breakfast in his cabin, with the first officer and the doctor—young Morley being in charge on deck. The doctor was glorying in a cup of strong coffee prepared by himself, and a piece of halibut *fricasseed* according to his directions; the first officer was enjoying some cold pork and beans; and the captain was looking at a chart which lay near, while he sipped his coffee now and then.

But each of them bounded from the table as they heard the shout "*sail ho!*" from the lookout, at the top-gallant cross-trees.

"Where away, and what does she look like?" cried young Morley, in reply.

Seawaif and his companions held their breath, and listened for the answer.

"I see three sail, sir, dead ahead; they seem square-rigged, and coming down right before the wind!" was the reply.

"Englishmen, and making for the coast, I'll wager my first prize-money," said the captain, as he hurried on deck.

"John-Bull-Men's, be gar—I shall get my instruments ready for amputat!" cried the delighted Frenchman.

"So will I!" said Mr. Doolittle, as he buckled on his sharp, but short cutlass, and followed his commander on deck.

The breeze was fresh, and the schooner, with only her lower sails and top-sails set, was going off to the eastward on a taut bow-line, her top-gallant and royal yards pointed to the wind, and her larboard tacks aboard. There was quite a heavy sea rolling; and as she pitched into and through it, she threw the snowy foam over her prow almost as high as her fore-top.

"See all clear for action, fore and aft—reeve preventer stays and braces—have the spare spars cleared away! Gunners, look to your children; they may have play soon. Boarders and pikemen, see that your tools are in their places!" cried the captain cheerfully, as he came on deck; and then he seized a spy-glass, and went aloft to a perch on the fore-top-gallant yard, where, seated, he scanned the vessels in sight.

"What do you make out, sir, if you please?" asked Mr. Doolittle, whose hopes for work and prize-money were now on the rise.

"I see six vessels; but they are yet too far off to make out whether they are armed or not!" was the reply.

"Shall the gunner open the magazine, sir?"

"Yes, after all the galley-fires are put out!"

The men went to their work, and their re-

spective stations quietly, but with a cheerful look, which betokened a perfect confidence in their vessel, and especially in their officers. They were two hundred in all, and nearly all of them Americans, reared in that noblest of all our national naval schools, the coast fishing business, which tries the hardest, and proves the best of men.

An hour passed, and the vessels were now hull-up ahead, yet Captain Seawaif gave no orders either to alter the course or shorten sail.

"What about our colors, sir?" asked the lieutenant.

"You can run 'em up in rolls* to their places, ready to pull out when I order it, Mr. Doolittle," said the captain, still keeping his glass directed toward the approaching ships.

"Monsieur le capitaine, if you please, are zem sheeps John-Bull-Men's?" asked the doctor, now, in shrill, falsetto voice.

"Yes, doctor, five merchant-men or transports, conveyed by one sloop-of-war. There will be work for you by-and-by," said the captain, closing up his glass, and descending to the deck.

"*Bon Dieu!* I am so much delight—I shall 'ave ze pleasure to amputat a great many of zem I hope!" cried the doctor, almost dancing with joy.

The enemy were now rising fast, not more than four or five miles off; but the merchant-men, obeying signals from the sloop-of-war, which had evidently discovered the nationality and character of the schooner, by her rig, hauled on a wind and shortened sail, while the man-of-war held her course under a cloud of canvas.

"Take your stations for working ship!" cried Seawaif, taking charge again, and sending Mr. Morley to his post, on the fore-castle.

The men bounded to the sheets and braces.

"Hard up the helm—ease off the sheets, and round in the weather-braces!" cried the captain.

"Tarnal thunder! you're not goin' to run from one sloop-o'-war, are you, sir?" asked the lieutenant, in agonized wonder.

"Get out and rig two spars, with iron enough on them to sink them, for drags; drop one over each quarter, and ask no impertinent questions, Mr. Doolittle," said the captain, quietly.

"I beg your pardon, sir, a hundred times—I thought you was a goin' to run!" said the now delighted officer, as he hastened to obey the order.

"Double-shot with grape and canister—gunners to your stations!" cried the captain, now. "Steward," he added, to his own servant, "go into the cabin, and get some of that old brandy of mine, and serve out a glass to every man that wishes it. Men, make no noise when I announce it, but within an hour that sloop-of-war shall strike her flag, or we'll go down with ours flying! When she is taken, the merchant-men will be easy prizes."

Had they not been cautioned, the men would have cheered so loudly as to have been heard on board of the sloop-of-war; but they obeyed the order, and remained silent.

After the drags were rigged and lowered over the side, held by stout hawsers, and not seen because sunk beneath the water, the schooner did not go more than three knots, although—under a full spread of canvas—she seemed to be running away from her antagonist, which now could be seen coming up hand over hand, her decks crowded with men, and her ports showing a battery of twenty-four guns.

On she came, the red cross of St. George flaunting from her peak, until she was within nearly a mile of the schooner when she fired a shot from one of her bow guns.

"Show them our colors and name!" cried the young captain, while his pale face flushed with a smile of terrible joy.

It was done in an instant; but the vessel's head was not changed, nor a sail touched.

Rapidly the Englishman closed up, heading a little to leeward, so as to range under her larboard beam.

"Crouch well behind the bulwarks, men; stand by your larboard guns, but do not touch a match until the order comes from my lips; depress your guns, so as to take her between wind and water! Sail-trimmers, stand to your sheets and braces, and be ready for orders."

* It is a common thing to roll up the flag, signals, pennants, etc., on board of a man-of-war, and hoist them to the truck with a slipping-loop, so that a slight twitch will loosen them when desired and unfurl them to the breeze.

These orders given, Captain Seawaif took his position on the larboard side of the quarter-deck, and with ill-concealed delight saw the Englishman range along until he was almost abeam.

"Haul down your colors, or I'll sink you! Strike, you Yankee rebel, strike!" shouted the English captain, who stood on the poop of his vessel in full uniform, steadying himself by holding on to the mizzen rigging.

"I'm just going to strike—not my colors, but you!" cried Seawaif, sarcastically, and instantly giving the order to pour in his whole broadside.

It was done with terrible effect, for the British had not anticipated resistance from a rebel whom they supposed to be using his best efforts to escape, and were huddled along the deck on the side next the schooner, and were cut down in fearful swaths. And as the sails were little injured, the sloop-of-war shot ahead, so that she was past the schooner before she could return the broadside.

"Cut away the drags, spring to your starboard battery—throw in chain-shot as well as grape—and cut her sticks away!" cried Seawaif.

Then ordering the helm up, as the schooner's headway increased, he veered off athwart the stern of the sloop; and as the guns came in range, delivered a raking fire, which not only swept her decks, but cutting away her masts, crippled her completely.

He then hauled on a wind, determined to pepper her until she should "strike," and not wishing to lose any men at close quarters, if he could help it. But he had no occasion to use his guns any more; for, suddenly, with a shock, which shook the sea and the air like an earthquake, the ill-fated craft was seen to fly in fragments, amid a cloud of smoke, into the air.

Whether by accident or design, no one could tell, but, in some way, the powder in her magazine had been ignited, and she was blown to atoms.

Prompted by humanity, Captain Seawaif instantly ordered the helm up, and steered for the spot where the sloop-of-war had been, in hopes to save some surviving persons of her crew.

But not a living soul could be seen. A few blackened spars and timbers only met the eye.

"*Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! zis is too bad!* Not one man to amputat—not one ball for extract!" said the doctor, with a sigh and a piteous grimace, as he looked in the water.

"You may have better luck another time, doctor," said Seawaif, as he gave orders to trim sails and haul on a wind again; for the transports—having seen the fate of their protector—were now crowding sail, and trying, like a flock of frightened sheep, to make their escape from an opponent which had done such fearful damage in so short a time. But the schooner had no lumbering cargo, and was ready for combat or a race, as occasion required.

CHAPTER VI.

It was two weeks to a day from the time when the "Tyrannicide" had weighed her anchor. The hour was about noon, and most of the steady-habited citizens of Salem were at dinner, when the heavy boom of the alarm-gun was heard from the wharf, starting every one to their feet. Confusion instantly took the place of order. Men, women, and children rushed into the streets, some pale with fright—all startled and excited.

The principal men of the place hurried down to the pier where the gun was, to ask of the look-out, who occupied a small watch-tower there, what was the cause of alarm. Among the first to reach the spot was Phineas Cringle, merchant, *et-cet-e-ra*; and close in his wake followed the old miser, Moses Gelson. And before they had time to ask many questions touching the cause of alarm, their eyes became their informants. Five large ships were seen entering the harbor, and leading them, Mr. Cringle saw his beautiful schooner, the "Tyrannicide." But he gnashed his teeth and wept with rage and vexation, as he saw that every vessel wore the English flag.

"It is too bad—too bad!" he groaned. "Oh, if I only had a battery of big guns here to sink the cursed ships before they cast an anchor. Wouldn't I do it? Indeed I would!"

"You won't have to waste your powder."

neighbor, ha, ha! he, he! ho, ho!" laughed old Moses Gelson, drily.

"Shut up, you cursed old mummy, or I'll ram you into this gun, and fire your old carcass at them!" cried the angry merchant.

And then, a sudden change in the colors of the vessels made him change in his temper, for he fairly danced and yelled with delight. From above every English flag an American ensign suddenly fluttered out of its roll, and the battery of the gallant schooner opened with a salute which made the old town ring again, and every patriot ear tingled with joy at the sound.

"That's wasting powder, you devilish old miser, isn't it? That schooner is mine, and them ships are her prizes, and worth more than you'll be if you live longer than Methusalem did, *et-cet-er-a!*" shouted the overjoyed merchant to old Gelson, who actually groaned at the thought.

"They're worth a powerful sight of money," muttered Gelson; and he groaned again, as he thought that none of that money was his.

"I reckon you'd like to own a share or two in the privateer, even if she does fight for liberty, *et-cet-er-a,*" continued the merchant, sarcastically.

The miser looked more and more troubled, and groaned again.

"The war is ruinous to commerce, eh, old stingy? Ruinous to British commerce; but it will fill my store-house, and a dozen more that I mean to build!" continued Mr. Cringle.

The schooner now took in sail, rounded to, and came to anchor. The ships in line followed her example. Then, in a very few minutes, a boat was lowered away from the quarter-deck of the schooner, and young Seawaif springing into it, was rapidly rowed to the landing-place.

"Are them ships your prizes?" asked Mr. Cringle, at the top of his voice, when the boat was still a hundred yards from the pier.

"Yes, sir; and taken without the loss of a man on our side, though we've sunk a sloop-of-war for the enemy!" cried Seawaif, in reply.

"Powder wasted, eh, you old mutton-head—powder wasted!" cried Mr. Cringle to old Gelson; and he danced around like a very child, for joy.

In a moment, the successful and worthily-exalted young captain reached the pier, and as he sprang upon it, he was clasped in the arms of the merchant, whose eyes now overflowed with the sweet water of joy, instead of the bitter tears of vexation which he had shed while the British flag only was flying.

And Seawaif was completely surrounded, literally taken by the citizens, who sought with Cringle to know all the *et-cet-er-a*s of the action. And they would not let him go until he had promised that evening to relate the whole affair at the town hall; after which they resolved to give him, his officers, and such of his crew as could come on shore, such a supper as would at least show their pride and good feeling over the first triumph of the *Tyrannicide*.

Then, and then only, did they permit him and the proud and happy merchant to emerge from their midst, and proceed to the residence of the latter, where the young captain received a welcome from the lovely Kate, which confused him far more than had the questions and presence of the crowd.

Kate was her father's housekeeper, as well as occasional clerk—for he had been a widower many years.

CHAPTER VII.

That evening, with the diffidence and yet the candor which almost always characterizes a brave man, Edward Seawaif related to the multitude which had assembled at, and literally crammed the town hall, all of the particulars of his recent action with the sloop-of-war, her fate, and his chase and successive capture of the five transports, which were laden with military stores and munitions of war, which were very much needed by Washington and his brave army just at that time. He was frequently interrupted with shouts of applause; and when, at the close, he congratulated his audience that they had not on this occasion cause to mourn the loss of any of their brave townsmen who were with him, their cheers rung loud and long. Warming with his theme, he urged upon all to enlist and act manfully in freedom's cause. "Success," said he, "ever waits upon the justly brave!" And he inveighed bitterly against those who hoped,

not only for the success of tyranny over the struggles of men who would be free, but who sided with them in actions as well as in words. "The soldiers of Britain are hired murderers," said he, in conclusion, "but the Tories of America are willing fratricides!" After his brief narrative and patriotic and telling speech was over, Capt. Seawaif and the only two officers who could be spared, even temporarily, from duty—Mr. Doolittle and Doctor La Motte—were escorted with a large, but select body of guests, led by a band of music to a large empty warehouse, in which the banquet had been spread.

Brief as had been their time for preparation, *impromptu* it might have been justly said, the feast was worthy of the fame of New England, of the motives of the givers, and the merits of those who were to enjoy it.

There were huge joints of beef, saddles of fat mutton, roasted geese, turkeys, and chickens. Nor were the "pork and beans," since so famous in Beverly, close by, forgotten—nor yet the pumpkin pies and Johnny cakes, so peculiarly Yankee dishes. Let no one deride them because they are such; but try them first, and then do it if they can.

With the eatables so abundant, it need not be supposed that bibbles were lacking. There were not only coffee and water, but beer, cider, brandy, wine, and any quantity of famed "New England rum," redolent of molasses, and fiery with strength.

After full justice had been done to the eatables, and the guests began to warm with the bibbles, songs were sung, and many a patriotic speech made, which would have shocked a servant of King George, had he heard it.

Mr. Phineas Cringle being called upon, delivered an oration full of fire and *et-cet-er-a*s, in which he declared that he was ready at any time to lay down his life and fortune for his beloved country.

The doctor was called upon for a speech, and he delivered one so unique and so very rich, that I cannot refuse it room in my narrative. He was considerably elevated, so much so, that his eyes danced like stars mirrored in a rippling lake, and his talking tackle ran as merrily as a well-rosined bow over a good violin.

"Shentilhommes!" said he, "shentilhommes, I salute you several, all, and singulare, each one! Nevare before 'ave I been so happy as now! Not alone because ze Yankee-doodle mens have wheep ze John-Bull mens; not alone because ze eagle of triumph 'ave perch himself upon our bannare, but, shentilhommes, because our services 'ave been appreciat by you! When we fight for kings, if we 'ave victory wiz us, zey say nossing, *do* nossing—but when we fight for ze people zat *will* be free, zey reward us!"

Loud cheers for a moment interrupted him but in a few moments he was allowed to proceed.

"Shentilhommes, I sank you from ze lower part of my heart to ze top of ze same! To begin again vere I was before. When men die for kings, ze kings nevare cry, nevare sigh, nevare care! No, shentilhommes, zey care no more for ozzare men's lives zan if zey were snakes, or zat leetle animale vich my frient Messieur Doolittle does not like, ze frog. But ven men die for ze people, ze people put zeur memory in zeur hearts and zere preserve it—preserve it—preserve it like—like!"

The Doctor was in trouble for a comparison. "Like beef in pickle!" said Mr. Doolittle, coming to the rescue.

"Thank you, sare—preserve it like one beet in peekle!" said the doctor, amid roars of laughter and shouts of applause.

"Shentilhommes, again I sank you. Zis is not yet a grand cuntry, but ven it shall begin for to devil-up itself [he meant develop, undoubtedly], "zen, shentilhommes, it shall be one grand cuntry as nevare was."

"Shentilhommes, La Belle France is one grand distance from here; but ven her people s'all hear how you fight ze John-Bull mens, zeur sympathy will come to you wiz ze wings of ze wind, and zey will send mens to help you fight! *Oui, yes* I mean, shentilhommes, zey will come to dance wiz you oware ze grave of tyranny! Mark you zat. I 'ave done. I drink viz you, I eat viz you; and if ever any of you shall need amputat, I will do him as easy as pull one toot!"

The doctor's speech, coming from his heart, if not clothed in the most elegant language or spoken unbrokenly, contained many fine truths and thoughts, and was fully appreciated by the listeners, as they attested by their rapturous applause.

Lieutenant Doolittle was called upon for a speech, but he bluntly and honestly said, that he had eaten and drank so much that he was "too full for utterance," thus saving his credit—as I have often wished that some of my acquaintances had, when bored by long and stupid dinner-table speeches.

At a late hour the guests retired from the festal board delighted, alike the entertainers and the entertained.

CHAPTER VIII.

It took a few days only to arrange matters in regard to the sale of the prizes and their cargoes (for the government wanted both, for Mr. Cringle acted as agent); and, as I said at the commencement of the story, with all of his eccentricities, he was strictly a *business* man. The crew of the "Tyrannicide" were allowed a short run on shore, after the English prisoners had been transferred to the charge of the army then encamped around Boston, and then orders were given to be ready for another and a longer cruise; that is, unless it should be again shortened by such success as they had already met with upon their first trip.

Whether it was by request or not, or intentional in one, or both, we cannot positively say; but one thing is certain, on the morning of the day set for the sailing of the schooner, Edward Seawaif was in the same parlor where he had blushing received the silken banner from the hands of Kate, and that lady was also present. And though both looked as innocent as two spring lambs in a field of clover, they were blushing like a pair of *peonies*.

And of the why and wherefore of that, we are also ignorant. And if we *knew*, we wouldn't tell; for the secrets of young folks don't belong to everybody.

"I am sorry that you are going away, Captain Seawaif—that is, I mean that I am sorry you are going again into peril!" said the blushing maiden.

"The more peril for me, the more profit is there likely to be for your father," said Seawaif.

"My father and myself would care little for profit which was gained with the loss of life or limb by you; for *we*—that is, *he* is very much attached to you," said the maiden, blushing more than ever.

"I am grateful, *very* grateful, for the interest and for the confidence which he places in me to give me so important a command; and I hope to prove my gratitude more by active deeds than idle words," replied Seawaif. "But, lady, pleasant though it is to linger here and converse with you who have extended to one who never knew a sister, such *sisterly* kindness, I must not stay. My vessel must be under way in a half hour more—a parting word with your father, and then I must go. Farewell, most kind lady—we may meet again, or we may not; but rest assured that you will never be forgotten by my grateful heart."

He went, and she stood alone. He had pressed her hand, but not this time to his lips, as he had before.

"Gratitude! A *sisterly* kindness!" she murmured, as she stood where he had left her. "If Edward Seawaif thinks that I feel no more than a sisterly kindness, he must be blind—blind, indeed! O God! it is hard to *love* and find no love in return!"

And tears started in her dark, expressive eyes, as she went to the window to look again at him, as he went on board his vessel.

"So Captain Ned parted with daughter Kate, and all ready for a start, *et-cet-er-a, et-cet-er-a!*" cried Mr. Cringle, as Seawaif came down stairs.

"Yes, sir—the tide will serve soon," replied the latter.

"And you still think of cruising down toward the West Indies?"

"Yes, sir; they will not expect our cruisers far away from our own coast, and therefore English men-o'-war will be more scarce, and merchantmen more plenty in that direction. By using disguise, and proper caution, I may cut out valuable prizes from some of their own ports. If that latitude becomes too hot after I've woke them up, I'll run over to the very coast of England—the last place in the world where they'd expect an American cruiser; and, before they know it, take as many prizes as I can man and send home!"

"It is a bold idea, but a good one!" said the merchant, after a moment's thought. "I know I've no need to caution you, so far as the safety of the schooner is concerned, but do take care of yourself! I'd rather lose a dozen vessels than harm should come to you! And, if you should chance to take any prisoners of rank, be sure to find out what their coat-of-arms is! I feel certain that you'll find out, some day, who your parents were, and that you belong to some noble family!"

"If they are in favor of King George and tyranny, I had rather never find them!" said the young captain, with spirit. "But, farewell, Mr. Cringle!"

"Good-bye—good-bye! God bless you, and give you luck, *et-cet-e-ra*!" said the warm-hearted merchant, wringing the hand of the young seaman warmly.

Seawaif started for his boat, which lay at the pier waiting for him; but, from some unknown impulse, he raised his eyes to the window, where Kate stood. And, as he did so, he saw that she was weeping. But, before he could take a second glance, she had shrunk back from his view, and he walked on, wondering what in the world she could be grieving for. He was too blind, indeed, to be able to read the secrets of her heart.

He soon reached the boat, and it, rowed by willing hands, flew swiftly over the water to the side of his vessel. In a few moments, the boat swung at the davits; five minutes later, the anchor was at its cat-head, and the white canvas was spread to the breeze. And, while the citizens on shore uttered many a cheering shout, the beautiful vessel moved from her place of anchorage—and, like a snowy bird freed from bondage, sped away toward her ocean-home.

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Cringle, most probably, would have gone with Seawaif so far as the pier, had not Moses Gelson, the miser, approached at the moment that the young captain was coming down stairs, and said that he wished to see him upon business. That was a magic word with Phineas Cringle, let it come from the lips of friend or foe, and he never refused its call.

Mr. Gelson did not receive a particular description, when we first introduced him to the reader—more the pity, for he deserved it.

Although really not so old as Mr. Cringle, by eight or ten years, he looked much older. His face, or what could be seen out of the dirty, white beard, which he was too stingy to have shaved, was cadaverous, wrinkled, and thin, as if worn with care and starvation. His very thin hair was almost gone—entirely so from the top of his head, leaving a kind of wretched fringe down about his gaunt neck. The thread-bare frock-coat, which he wore tightly-buttoned to the throat, leaving it doubtful whether he wore a shirt or not—for none could be seen—was of a snuff-brown color, not calculated to show dirt; very greasy at the wrists, and darned and patched at the elbows with threads and shreds of many colors. Its skirt descended to his knees. The lower limbs, from the knee downward—shrunk ones they were, indeed—were encased in a pair of brown stockings, and the buckles in his shoes were of brass. Upon his head he wore a small kind of skull-cap. His tall, slim figure was bent over so much, that his back looked to be humped.

No one, to look at the old wretch, would suppose that he had laid up over fifty thousand pounds sterling, yet it really was so; and, when he was sure of making *cent per cent* in return, he would very quickly produce his thousands on "the best of security." He was a safe operator; he would never have skinned a flint for its hide and tallow, if he had to spoil his own jack-knife in doing it—not he.

The nose of Mr. Moses Gelson has not yet been poked into our description, yet it occupied so prominent a position that to neglect it would be almost criminal. It was a great nose, an *Israelitish* nose—a nose narrow in bridge, bulging out amidships, and bending over into a bill-hook, the point of which seemed intent on reaching and transfixing his snout below. It was a wide-nostrilled snuff-snouting nose. But the miser was too mean to indulge even in that abomination of abominations.

"Well, Moses Gelson, what's your business?" asked Mr. Cringle, rather tartly, after he had shaken hands and said "good-bye" to Captain Seawaif.

"My dear Mr. Cringle, I called to pay my dutiful respects, and to—"

"Don't dear me, Gelson, don't dear me!" said the merchant, sharply. "You always cheat them that you hold most dear on your tongue!"

"But, Mr. Cringle, hear me. You know I wouldn't cheat you—albeit, making a good bargain isn't cheating—I wouldn't cheat you, Mr. Cringle!"

"Not without you got a good chance, and I'll not tempt you with one! But to your business, *et-cet-e-ra*. Let us have that without any compliments."

"You asked me a question, the other day, Mr. Cringle, that I have been revolving in my mind ever since, and now I am ready to answer it!"

"What was it?"

"When your schooner came in with her prizes, you asked me if I wouldn't like to own a few shares in her, didn't you?"

"If I did, it was only in sarcasm; but now I'll repeat the question. Would you?"

"Yes!" said the old miser. "Made and provided that she's insured to her full value. I'd like to own all you'll sell of her; for I see that, in the hands of that smart young fellow, she'll make a whole mint of money!"

"Most likely she will!" said the merchant, dryly. "By the way, Gelson, in a matter that will pay, you have considerable money you can invest, have you not?"

"Yes—or no; that is, I am a poor man, but I can get a few thousand pounds from friends, to invest!"

"From friends? Mose Gelson, you haven't a friend in the world. Your very dog would feed on your carcass, lean as it is, if you didn't feed it well. And when a man is so mean that even his dog hates him, he must be meaner than dirt!"

"You are severe, Mr. Cringle; but I forgive you! Will you sell a few shares in your schooner? I came on business, and I want to talk business!" said the miser, rather sharply, for him.

"Well, I'll talk business," said Mr. Cringle. "My schooner cost me about five thousand pounds, and her fit-out a couple of thousand more! That is seven thousand pounds—isn't it?"

"Yes; and she can be insured for all that," said Gelson, anxiously.

"And you could raise from your *only* friend, and that's yourself, full fifty thousand pounds. I believe!"

"Well, well, Mr. Cringle come to the point—to the point!"

"My share in the prizes she has taken will nearly double fifty thousand pounds, Moses Gelson!"

The miser groaned, but his anxiety to invest rose instantly a hundred per cent.

"How many shares will you sell me?" he asked.

"Not one, you infernal flint-hearted, sponge-headed old scoundrel! Not one to save your twopenny soul from the bottomless pit! You are a tory at heart—a thief where you've courage to steal; and if you're ever killed by a bullet, there will be 'a waste of powder!' Leave my store, before I get mad and kick you, *et-cet-e-ra, et-cet-e-ra*!" cried the merchant, letting out the passion which he had kept in for the last fifteen or twenty minutes.

The old miser saw the dangerous mood of the merchant, and left.

CHAPTER X.

"By ginger! we're in a hobble, now, cap'n!" cried Mr. Doolittle, to the commander of the "Tyrannicide," on the fourth morning after she had sailed on her second trip, as he aroused him from slumber and dreams of—we'll say not what or who. "We haven't had this head-wind four days for nothing. I reckoned all the while there was bad luck a brewin' for us!"

"What's the matter? What time is it?" asked the captain, as he sprung from his swinging cot.

"It's broad daylight, sir; and matter enough. A dead calm, with the land on one

side of us, and a whole fleet of British men-o'-war on t'other!"

"What land is it?" asked the captain, as he hurried on his clothes.

"Nantucket, I reckon!" said the lieutenant, looking dreadfully wobegone.

In a few moments, the captain was on deck, where the most of the crew and all of the other officers had already gathered.

The officer of the deck, Mr. Morley, handed him the spy-glass; but he scarcely needed it, for there were a dozen of the enemy's ships ranged along on his eastern sea-board, none of them more than five or six miles off, and several almost within cannon-range. They were line-of-battle ships, frigates, and corvettes, probably composing a fleet sent to Boston or New York. There they lay, rising and falling on the long swell of the ocean, like hungry beasts, lazily waiting for a victim to come athwart them. They evidently had seen and made out the character of the "Tyrannicide," for several of them were headed in toward her with all sail set; but, as not a breath of wind rippled the water, they made no headway. But a great danger still threatened: If the calm continued, they might get out their boats; and, by sheer strength of numbers, carry the schooner by boarding.

The young captain thought of all this, while he coolly scanned the squadron; but no change in his color, not the slightest agitation of nerve, gave a hint of it.

After a thorough scrutiny of the vessels, he turned his glass toward the shore. And his eyes flashed with a strange, glad light, as he looked at the land.

"There is the first of earth which I can remember to have looked upon!" said he, to Mr. Doolittle pointing to a small island, nearly covered with stunted pines, and all rock-bound, except one spot of a cable's length of white, sandy beach. "On that little beach I was drifted on shore, a waif of humanity, to live—for Heaven knows what. That island once seemed to me the most beautiful spot on earth—it was the home of my childhood!"

"It's a dreary-looking place for a child's play-ground," said the lieutenant.

"My play was my study; and, under such a good old man as I had for a teacher, study was a pleasure. My lessons learned, then I used to come out upon the beach, and watch the great blue waves of the Atlantic, as they rolled landward, and think how terrible must have been the storm which wrecked the ship which bore me to that spot!"

"I believe those Englishmen are going to ask us to hoist our colors, sir!" said Mr. Morley, pointing to a wreath of white smoke, which issued from the bow-port of the nearest vessel.

A moment later, and the dull report of the gun reached their ears, coming with a sullen and bull-doggish boom over the still waters.

"Let them see our bunting; I'm not so uncourteous as to refuse them that pleasure," said Seawaif, with a smile.

In a few minutes, all of the colors of the schooner were hoisted, but the lazy air scarcely lifted them out clear of the spars on which they hung.

"They are signaling each other—they are concocting some devil's work to annoy us, probably," said the captain, as he glanced again at them through his glass.

"Isn't that a cloud-bank rising far away in the East, sir?" asked Mr. Doolittle.

"Yes, but it comes up very slowly. If it brings a breeze, they will get the first breath of it, and close up, while we're crippled in the calm!" replied the captain.

Again he raised his glass to his eyes, and scrutinized the movements in the hostile squadron. And, as he did so, his eyes flashed and his cheeks flushed, as the men had seen them do once before, when he was about to engage the English sloop-of-war.

"Beat to quarters!" he cried. "Get out the boarding nettings and trice them up. Put a bag of musket-bullets in each of the carronades! Load all the small arms! Boarders, axe-men, and pike-men to your stations!"

"Messieur le Capitaine, will ze John-Bull mens come in zeir boats?" asked the doctor, taking off his hat, and bowing gracefully.

"Yes, doctor; that seems to be their intention. Boats are being lowered from all of the nearest ships, and large crews are crowding into them."

"Sank you, sare—sank you! I am very much delight! It is possible now zat I shall

'ave ze grand pleasure to amputat somesing or somebody!"

And the worthy doctor hurried below, to get his instruments ready.

We will now, for a moment, go on board of the flag-ship of the squadron, the "Bristol," Commodore Sir Peter Parker, which vessel bristled with fifty guns.

CHAPTER XI.

The commodore was a veteran of many years' service—his white hair and his bronzed face told that, almost as well as the many decorations he proudly wore upon his breast. He was well-advanced in years, yet the fire of youth was in his eyes and vigor in his step, as he paced to and fro upon his deck at day-dawn, pausing once in a while to look through his glass at the schooner that had just been discovered, close in with the land, to the west.

"She is evidently a Yankee, armed and fully manned, Sir Peter!" said his senior officer, who had also been examining the schooner through a glass.

"She takes our vicinity very quietly. I wonder if she will dare to show her colors? Give her a gun and see!"

The gun was fired, with an effect which the reader already knows.

"There goes her bunting to the gaff—Yankee of course—and flags with names or mottoes up to the fore and main! It's a pity we hadn't wind enough to blow them out and move us up in range!" said the officer.

"Better as it is. If she had a breeze, she is so close in with the land, that she'd creep away from us in some unknown channel—better as it is, for we can take her with our boats!"

"Perhaps, with a very heavy loss of men, Sir Peter."

"Loss or no loss, she must be taken. She is one of that class which so annoys us on this coast by slipping out of the little harbors and pouncing upon our transports. More than twenty ships, long since due at New York, are missing, and we've heard of several that have been taken by these cursed privateers—licensed pirates. She *must* be taken, sir, *must*!"

The face of the commodore, usually very pale and thoughtful, now flushed up with excitement. After pacing hurriedly to and fro for a few minutes, he again said to the officer:

"Captain Morris, make signal for a division of armed boats to come alongside, from each vessel in the squadron, ready for duty!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" replied the officer; and calling the signal officer, he gave the necessary orders.

"If the calm lasts, we'll have the saucy scoundrel in an hour or two!" said the old commodore, as he saw the armed boats hurrying toward his ship.

"He is getting ready for us, sir. There go his boarding nettings up, sir!" said Captain Wilson.

"So much the better—there is no fun in fighting an antagonist which won't strike back. Have our own boats manned, sir, a carronade in the bows of the launch, and plenty of grape and canister in it!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"And," continued the commodore, "have my barge lowered and manned—I will lead the attack myself!"

"Sir Peter, do not be offended, but permit me to beg you not to think of that. In the first place, as your executive officer, it is my right, according to naval usage, to lead any expedition which is sent from the ship, as much as it is my right in action to fight her under your orders. Next, your life is too precious to your country to be risked, perhaps lost, in a trifling affair such as this will be!" said Wilson.

"By your remark, a little while ago, I judged that you did *not* think it would be a trifling affair!" said the commodore, rather severely.

"I said that many lives *might* be lost, and I say so still; for men who fight with their necks in a halter fight desperately. But from no word of mine, sir, could you infer that I either disapproved of the attack, or would hesitate to lead it. On the contrary, Sir Peter, you should, by this time, after the many years I have served under and with you, have known

that I would not shrink from engaging the enemy, if I knew I would be blown from time to eternity the next moment!" said Morris, with deep feeling.

"Forgive me, captain; I was too hasty. I *always* am!" said the old commodore, tendering his hand. "You shall lead the expedition; and I will stay here and see how you do it."

"A thousand thanks, Sir Peter—a thousand thanks. Now, the schooner *shall* be ours in less than two hours, or I will yield that which is most precious to me on earth—the claim which you have given me upon your orphan ward's hand!" cried Morris.

"Take the schooner, and you shall carry her a prize into Bermuda, and see my fair ward, and do what you can to place yourself as high in her good graces as you are in mine," said the commodore, with a pleasant smile.

"She shall be taken, or I'll soon fill a sailor's winding-sheet!" said Morris, as he hurried into the cabin to arm himself.

By the time this was done, and he had returned to the quarter-deck, the boats were ready, and the crews impatient for their work.

Why it is that men about to engage in deadly conflict are always eager to be led on, even though they know that many of them will go to the cold embrace of death, it is hard to tell—but that it is, we know! Perhaps, like a trapped bachelor, who has dreaded matrimony all his life, because they are *engaged*, they are in a hurry to have it all over, as he is with the wedding ceremony.

The leader of the expedition was received with a cheer, as he passed over the side of his ship and into his boat; and then the boats were ranged off into three divisions and columns, and rowed away steadily toward the schooner.

CHAPTER XII.

Every movement of the boats and men of the British fleet had been closely watched by Edward Seawaif, and not without anxiety; for he saw that he would be attacked by at least three or four times his number. And his vessel was utterly helpless without a breeze, and boats approaching to board him, from over either the bow or stern, would be unharmed by his carronades. But in his countenance no one could see the least trace of anxiety—the least sign of distrust, as to the result of the coming action.

"Haden't I better brail up the fore-sail, and lower the main-sail out of the way, sir?" asked the first officer, as he saw the boats in column moving out from the side of the British flag-ship.

"Yes, it will be as well, but keep the rest of the canvas as it is, and a man at the helm all the time; for, if I'm not mistaken, the wind out of the clouds in the east there, will reach us before the boats do. If it does, we are safe; for there are channels in beyond these islands well known to me, where it would be destruction for them to try to follow me."

The boats were now seen to form for attack, and to pull steadily on toward the schooner.

"Steward, serve out a glass of grog to every man," said Seawaif, only acting in accordance with the custom of that era; in fact, omitting to do what the English generally did, to put gunpowder in the liquor. "Men," he added, "you must stand firm and work sharp! It will never do to be taken; for, at the best, a prison-ship, with all its terrible horrors, is before us. We shall surely beat them off, if you but do your duty—your motto flies above your heads, and it, like our flag, shall wave till we sink!"

"Ah, ha! Monsieur le Capitaine!" said the delighted doctor, coming on deck without his coat, his shirt-sleeves rolled up, a white apron on, a Turkish cap on his head, and an anatomizing knife in his hand, looking more like a cook than a surgeon. "Ah, ha! Monsieur le Capitaine, I sink now zat ze John-Bull mens will give me some work, eh? I am all ready for ze amputat, ze ball-extract, or ze fight, ven I 'ave nossing else for to do."

"Ready for a glass of brandy, too, doctor?"

"Certainement, mon cher Capitaine—certainement, I am always ready for zat." And he accepted the captain's signal to go in the cabin and take a glass of brandy with him, for

the boats were yet a couple of miles distant, and there was no pressing necessity for his repairing immediately to his station.

When the captain again came out of the cabin, he addressed the gunner, who stood at the long amidship pivot-piece, and said:

"You may as well try and weaken their number, Mr. Brownell; I think you can get your piece to bear over the larboard quarter, so as to at least bother them some."

The old gunner, a man who had seen more experience in that line than any other one on board of the vessel, very carefully trained his gun, which was the only one in the schooner's then position which could be brought to bear upon the line, or rather the *lines* of boats. Having elevated it to suit his ideas, he applied the match, and its double-shotted charge sped away on its errand of death.

"A little too high; but you've made them scatter and separate," said the captain, who had been watching the shot with his glass. "You'll have to pick them out singly now; they're spreading so as to take us bow and stern."

The mortified gunner, who seldom missed his aim, caused his piece to be reloaded carefully, and again sighting it with precision, fired another shot.

"That is better; though not quite the thing yet," said the captain, approvingly. "You took all the oars from one side of one of the boats clean, and made the rowers turn somersets over the thwarts like dancing monkeys!"

"I'll rake *men* instead of oars next time!" said the gunner, as he took a fresh quid in his cheek, while the gun's crew reloaded the piece.

And true to his word, with the next shot he hove the heavy ball fairly into or through one of the largest boats, sinking it, and evidently killing or crippling many of the crew, though the survivors were picked up by another boat.

"Hurrah! that's the way to do it; give 'em ginger!" cried Mr. Doolittle.

"Ah, mon Dieu! if I was only zere to amputat!" sighed La Motte.

"You'll have chances enough here before long, I fear!" said the captain, in a low tone.

"Ah, mon Dieu! no such good fortune, I fear, captain! Before ze boat come, ze wind or somesing will occur which shall deprive me of ze pleasure!"

And even as if the worthy and zealous doctor were a prophet, a slight breeze began to ripple the water, and to lift the flags and fill the sails of the English fleet. And just as the gunner had sunk a second boat, and the whole advancing line was yet a mile away, enough of the breeze reached the schooner to barely give her steerage-way, so that she could lay her broadside to the advancing boats.

"No fear now, my lads. I wish every boat from their fleet were on their way to attack us. Stand by the carronades, and they shall have enough of fun to last them *one* while!" cried Seawaif.

Then the crew of the privateer replied with hearty cheers; and, as their gallant craft began to move, and the main and foresails were once more set, they felt invincible, even though the heavy ships of the enemy were beginning to close up.

In a few moments, another of the enemy's boats was disabled; and, as they were now almost in carronade range, the men at the batteries began to sight their pieces. But suddenly signals of recall were made from the flag-ship, which, with the other vessels, now showed signs of having received a fresh breeze, and very rapidly began to lessen the distance between them and the schooner.

Coolly ordering the gunner to put a single round shot over a full charge of powder in his long gun, Captain Seawaif bade him keep its range on the leading ship; and then, ordering the helm up, and every sail set that would draw, headed his vessel directly for the point of the small island, which he had spoken of as the play-ground of his youth to Mr. Doolittle.

Slowly the schooner moved on; but very rapidly the leading English ship gained upon him. She was delayed a few minutes in picking up her boats, but in less than a half-hour she was so near, that she threw a shot close under the stern of the schooner, from one of her bow-chasers.

"That is a compliment which must be returned. Send him our card, Mr. Brownell!" cried the captain, with a quiet smile, to the old gunner. "I think your messenger is the longest winded!"

The old gunner smiled grimly, carefully elevated his piece for a long shot, watched the

roll of the sea for at least three or four minutes, and finally applied the match.

"Jupiter and Mars, but you did that well! The splinters flew from his bow-port, and I shouldn't be surprised if you had dismounted a gun for him," said the captain, as he looked through his glass. "Try again, Mr. Brownell—try again, and see if you can't trouble his spars—his three masts range in one, now!"

With the same care that he used before, the gunner again prepared his piece and fired. At the same moment that he did so, another wreath of smoke came from the enemy's ship, and the ball ricocheting from the water close astern, took off the head of the man at the helm as neatly almost as if it had been done by a headsman's axe, and then pitching through both the main and foresails, dropped into the sea over the bows with a sullen plunge, as much as to say: "I've done my work, and want rest now!"

"Mon Dieu! ze John-Bull-mens take from from me my privilege!" said the doctor, angrily. "Zey amputat my own mens! Nevare mind—nevare mind—I pay zem for zat before soon!"

"That last shot of yours did the work—see, they're taking in head-sails to ease their foremast. You have evidently weakened it," said the captain, who, noticing that another man had sprung to the wheel in place of him who had fallen, had not removed his glass from the enemy for an instant.

"I'll give them more work to do," said the delighted gunner. "Load lively, my hearties—load lively!"

Again a shot came from the enemy, but this time it fell short, proving that the schooner was gaining with the now freshening breeze, and the other losing by taking in sail.

"One more shot, Mr. Brownell, and then I'll run in behind the island, and let them follow me if they dare. By Jupiter! her foremast is going now, your last shot must have plummed it!"

The gunner did not reply to the captain—he was too busy in sighting his favorite.

Scarcely had he fired his third shot, when the tall foremast of the enemy, with all of its upper spars, was seen to reel and fall, and the ship, all in confusion, to come up in the wind.

An involuntary cheer burst from the crew of the "Tyrannicide," which was so echoed from the rocky cliffs of the little island which they were approaching, that it seemed to be returned by a hundred throats on shore—though there was no living soul upon the islet.

"I wish I could pay more attention to that gentleman's wants," said the captain. "But I cannot—his consorts are coming up hand over hand, and I must turn pilot for our own dear barkie now!"

Taking his station by the man at the helm he coned the vessel and gave the course, while under a full press of sail, without further damage; the schooner shot around the point of the island, and was soon threading a narrow and intricate passage among other islands, still further to the westward, where Seawail would only have been too glad to see the British try to follow him.

Thus, for the present, we will leave him and return to the "Bristol."

CHAPTER XIII.

When the commodore, Sir Peter Parker, saw the way that his boats were being handled by the long gun on board the Yankee schooner, his rage knew no bounds.

"Pull, you devils, pull, and board her, and hang every cursed rebel to his own spars!" he shouted, although the boats were beyond hearing.

As the breeze reached his vessel, he ordered every sail crowded on, in hopes to get within gun-shot of the schooner, and to sink her before she got the wind.

But when he saw that the breeze had reached the schooner sufficiently to give her steerage-way, and bring her whole broadside to bear upon the boats, he immediately ordered the signal for their recall to be made; for he knew well, that if the schooner was now carried, it could only be done at an immense loss of life.

"Poor Morris!" he murmured, as he gave this order. "It would have been a glorious chance for him, and he might have won an 'order' by it. But while man proposes, God disposes; and he must take luck as it comes!"

As the ship had now gathered headway, her boats were soon alongside, crews on board, and hoisted up.

"I'm glad that you are safe, Morris—how many men have you lost?" said the commodore to the mortified captain, as he appeared on the quarter-deck.

"Twenty men killed—more disabled; and two launches and a cutter sunk, sir! Fortunately, none of them belonged to this ship—unfortunately, perhaps; for I had about as willingly have been killed as to have failed in my object!"

"Pshaw, Morris—it was no fault of yours. No man can conquer fortune—your intention was gallant, and would have succeeded but for this wind coming up!"

"It will enable us to take her yet," said the captain, observing, joyfully, that the distance between the vessels was rapidly shortening. "When we once get her under our guns, we'll pay her off. If you please, sir, I'll go forward and see to training the bow guns on her!"

"Do so, my dear Morris, but remember the promised voyage to Bermuda, and don't cripple her spars or damage her hull so that we'll have to destroy her," said the commodore, with a pleasant laugh; for he felt so confident that the schooner would soon be taken, that he ordered the steward, who announced that breakfast was ready, to keep it warm until the Yankee had been captured.

It is singular how all commodores and captains will swear! They seem to esteem it as an inalienable, peculiar, and self-only-possessed right. I sailed with one once, when I had the honor to hold a commission in our gallant navy, who used to curse till all was blue—yes black—around him; but if he heard an oath from any other officer on board, a reprimand reached the offender instantly.

The commodore now took his position on the top-gallant fore-castle of his ship; and with his spy-glass, carefully prepared to watch the effects of his shot in "humbling Yankee pride, and crushing Yankee insolence," as he said.

When he saw that his first shot fell short, he shouted:

"More powder there, you monkeys more powder!"

But when, a few moments later, a shot came from the schooner, crashing in over the edge of the bow-port, killing and wounding near a dozen men, he fairly turned white with rage.

His next shot pleased him better.

"I can see daylight through his canvas!" he shouted. "See if you can't hull her next time!"

But even while he was speaking, a shot passed his side, not three feet from him, and striking the foremast directly in the centre, passed through it, and dropped on the deck beyond.

"A thousand curses on the luck—in with the head-sails quick, or the mast is gone—the cursed rebel will escape!" he shouted, now redder than his own cross, and crosser than a sore-headed bear.

The reader knows the rest—how, after one more shot, the spars of the proud Englishman came tumbling down, and she was utterly disabled.

I have too many thrilling incidents, scenes, and adventures to tell in this story, to permit myself to linger over any point not full of interest; therefore, I will close this chapter by saying, that after the commodore saw the schooner pass beyond his reach, he made arrangements for transferring his flag to another ship, and sent Captain Morris with the "Bristol" to Bermuda, to repair damages.

CHAPTER XI

On the broad, breeze-swept, shaded and vine-embowered piazza of a large house, which overlooked the reef-locked harbor of Bermuda, stood as lovely a girl as one could well dream of, or wish to look upon, even if he were a painter or a sculptor in search of a study or a model. She was not very tall, in truth, rather petite; but never was a figure more exquisitely proportioned. Her foot small, ankle exquisitely turned; her hand gracefully shaped, and arm swelling out above the delicate wrist, so round, and white, and velvety soft, that one could not but deem it heavenly to be hugged to death by a pair of such—"capital punishment," one might say; form, full and plump as if made for life and love, her features also were fine, expressive of delicacy and intellect; her eyes large and blue as a cloudless morning

sky; her hair a golden brown, tossing in ringlets over a neck and shoulders as white and soft as the lily which opens on the lakes in summer-time.

The scene upon which she stood and looked was not lacking in beauty, to harmonize with her own. Before her was a large garden, teeming everywhere with fruit and flowers of that rich and gorgeous nature which only a southern clime can bring forth and nurture. Beyond this, lay the pale, green water of the harbor, dancing to the touch of a light breeze amid the sun-rays, like animated emeralds—beyond it still, the purple loom of the coral reefs could be seen; and yet further out, the azure of the deeper water of old ocean.

A few houses only were scattered here and there around, looking like the villas of wealthy people; but near a fort, or rather a protected battery, which commanded the harbor, were many cottages, apparently those of working and poor people, for pigs and children were plenty about the doors—rather a certain sign, I believe. There was also a spar yard, and buildings evidently adapted to use for making naval repairs; and several vessels lying near, some disabled and others fitting out, justified the supposition that this was a kind of naval rendezvous. The nationality of the place was attested by the English flag, which floated from a tall staff inside of the battery-works, and a smaller one which waved from over the house which we first named in this chapter, and which, we may as well say, was the then residence of Sir Humphrey Dorset, the governor of the island—a pompous, beef-fed, liquor-loving baronet, who wanted much to serve his country in some capacity where it would pay something—for youthful extravagance had not only devoured a considerable patrimony, but so encumbered that which he had left, that a quiet residence abroad was preferable to a bailiff-troubled one at home. Sir Humphrey judged of men only by their money and will to spend it, and their love of liquor and capacity to hold it. Beyond this, he had scarcely an idea, if we except one thing, an inordinate love for his only daughter, Venona—a delicate, slender, *spirituelle*, beautiful creature, in everything so much his opposite, that one might well doubt her being his child. Certainly, she in no wise resembled him; but she might have resembled her mother, who had been dead many years; in truth, she died before Venona was at an age to remember her beauty or appreciate her goodness.

Venona's great, dark eyes, her pale and thoughtful face, so full of soul, only animated when some fresh and beautiful thought came like a sun-ray upon her mind—her hair hanging in wild, glossy, night-like tresses over her neck and shoulders—her dreamy look—her lithe, tall, and swaying figure, all full of grace, made a great contrast to the beauty of Lizzie Egerton, the one whom we first described, and who was none other than the orphan ward of Sir Peter Parker, before alluded to, in connection with the name of Sir Peter's friend, Captain Morris.

While Lizzie was thus standing where we first saw her, on the piazza, looking out upon the beautiful scene before her, and enjoying the cool, delicious breeze, which, coming from over the water and through the groves of fruits and flowers, bore to her their sweet aroma, Venona Dorset stole softly up behind her, and putting her arms about her round, small waist, imprinted a kiss on her white shoulder.

Lizzie started, uttering a low cry; but when she looked around and saw whose was the arm that embraced her, whose the lips that had touched her soft skin; she smiled sweetly; and passing her arm around Venona's slender waist, and drawing her to her bosom, imprinted a sisterly kiss upon her white forehead.

"Is not this a lovely evening, Venona?" she said. "I am watching to see the fires of that great, red, blazing sun, put out in the blue bath of the ocean, in the far west. How slowly, grandly, it seems to go down to its couch, canopied above by those clouds of purple and gold!"

"It is beautiful—but, like all things beautiful, it will not last—but is passing, fading away!" sighed Venona.

"Going, like a great and victorious chief, dying on his last battle-field, in the blaze of his own glory!" said Lizzie.

"What is that, far away, right where the lower edge of the great fiery orb is touching the blue water?" asked Venona. "It looks like a white bird, a swan afloat between the sky and water!"

"Why, child, cannot you tell a sail from a bird? It is a vessel—probably some of my uncle's fleet!" said Lizzie, with a laugh.

"I am not the niece of a *commodore*, and should not be expected to know a vessel from a bird when it is fifteen or twenty miles away," said Venona, rather nettled at being laughed at.

"Don't be offended, dear Venona—I did but jest," said Lizzie; and this time her kiss was pressed upon the fair girl's pouting lips.

"Perhaps it is your uncle himself, who comes to bring you the lover whom he writes so often about—the gallant Captain Morris," said Venona, in a bantering way, instantly banishing the shadow that had flitted over her brow.

"The detestable Captain Morris!" if you please, my dear "coz," said Lizzie, addressing Venona as if she were a relative, though, in truth, there was very slight, if any relationship between the Parkers and Dorsets, though Sir Humphrey insisted that there had been an intermarriage between them somewhere in the thirteenth century.

"Ah, how can you say so, Lizzie! For my part, though I have only seen him two or three times, I think him very much a man. Something of a martinet, perhaps—smelling too, a little of tar; yet, for all that, a pretty good creature, who'd be apt to let his wife have her own way—and what more does a woman want?"

"What more, Venona?" I am astonished to hear you, who are so full of heart, soul, intellect, speak so lightly—so unlike yourself! A woman wants a man whom her heart tells her that she can love—a man, a true man, with high courage, honor, truth, noble impulses; thoughts which tend upward toward the sky, not down upon the earth—one whom she can trust, revere, respect, worship next to her God!"

"There, there, dear Lizzie, I have succeeded in what I wished to do—I have aroused your dreaming heart into life—into speaking what I feel. Dear Lizzie, I hope you will get such a man, for you are worthy of it!"

"Thanks, dear Venona—thanks! I might have understood you, but I am growing stupid, I believe. When my uncle sends us back to the bold, wild, but ever-loved shores of our native land, its clear, strong air may strengthen my brain. I feel as if this lazy clime and sleepy atmosphere were lessening the nerve of all my system—mental and physical!"

"Tally-ho! Tally-ho! So I've struck the scent and found ye at last, young blossoms, have I?" cried Sir Humphrey, coming forward at this moment from the door which opened out upon the piazza.

He was like a French novel in one sense—full as broad as he was long, and the costume of the day, knee-breeches, long waistcoat and broad-skirted coat, showed his rotundity of leg and body fully. A full-dress wig and small-sword helped to set him off, while the small, black tri-colored hat sat upon the powdered wig, like a very small darkey doubled up on a big pile of cotton. His very small nose set in between his great, puffy cheeks, like a ruby between two immense carnations—his little eyes looking out over them, like stars just peeping over a couple of clouds. His upper story (that where the brain is located) seemed rather scant of room, and had not the appearance of being crowdedly furnished.

"So my blossoms!" said this jolly gentleman of sixty or thereabouts, "you're snuffing the sea breeze, are you? I feel as lonesome here as a pig in a strange meadow—not a soul to drink with, not a person to talk to, but the deaf doctor or the lame parson. Can't you come in and sing a few staves to warm up my old heart? I wish your uncle would come, young gipsy; he can stand his four bottles without winking; but that pet of his, Morris, is a milk-sop. He always gives in at two!"

"How singular, dear father! We were both talking of those very two individuals, just before you found us—and Lizzie don't think any more of Captain Morris than you do; while I think he is a very proper, agreeable, nice man!"

"You do, hussy? Why he's a regular milk-sop of a man. He don't know good liquor from bad—I do believe he'd light a cheroot at the big end! He a man, and can't go his three bottles!"

"Did you notice that sail in the offing, Sir Humphrey?" asked Lizzie, who had too often heard his estimate of what made a man, to be much amused at it.

"No—a sail? The look-outs have not reported any!"

"Yet there is one; look right where the sun is going down—do you not see a white speck?"

"Why, yes—by Bacchus, I believe I do! I hope whoever comes will know how to drink. This is a very lonesome place. I'd about as well be a gauger in Ireland as a governor here, for all the company and comfort I see!"

"How long will it take for that vessel to get in, Sir Humphrey?" asked Lizzie.

"Maybe half the night, my blossom! She's a long way off, and the wind is light and dying away!"

"I am sorry that we have no moonlight, tonight," said Venona; "it would be so pleasant to sit here and watch the white speck as it grew, and grew out into the distinctness of a noble vessel, whose throne is on the mighty deep, whose battles are fought with the elements, and whose path is trackless!"

"Well, there is no moon, blossom, so come in and sing a ballad or two for your old gov'nor, while he puts a bottle of good sherry under his jacket, and smokes a pipe or two! Come gipsies, an old man is better company than none at all—come along!"

And taking an arm of each under his own, he marched in with his laughing prizes.

CHAPTER XV.

When Seawaif ran in among the islands below Nantucket, he knew well that no vessel of the enemy would follow him there; but as there was every appearance of having the wind out fresh from the northward and westward by night-time, he stood in toward the main, so that when he caught the favorable wind, he might run down the coast in smooth water, instead of pitching and rolling in a heavy sea further out.

It was but a short time before he lost sight of the British fleet—much to his own joy and that of his crew—for hard knocks and precious little prize-money is all that a privateer can expect from a man-of-war. But the doctor was really unhappy.

"No amputat! No ball-extract! No nosing!" he muttered, as he walked up and down the deck. "Be gar, zis is not war, it is play, babee play."

"You shall have work rather than play, all in good time," said the captain, laughing at the doctor's complaints.

"Ah, Monsieur le capitaine, I fear nevere, sare, nevere!" sighed the doctor. "Two times we 'ave fight the John-Bull-mens—two times, sare, and nevere once yet I stain my instruments. It is too bad—too bad!"

And the doctor retired to his state-room, to test the consolatory power of some cognac which he kept there for private use.

A strong north-west gale setting in on the night that followed her escape from the fleet of Sir Peter Parker, drove the "Tyrannicide" down the American coast rapidly, until she had reached the latitude of the Savannah River, or about 32 degrees south; and in all this long route she had not seen a single vessel, except some small American coasters, off ports neither in possession of, nor blockaded by the enemy.

Tired of this do-nothing work, Seawaif determined to run off the land, and strike the track of some of the homeward-bound West-Indiamen; and with the last of his north-westerly gale, he hauled out to the eastward.

The wind began to lessen as he receded from the land, and when he was about two hundred miles out, the night of the third day found the vessel in a dead calm. The sails were flapping idly against the spars, the watch half asleep, and the lazy waves heaving slowly to and fro, like breathings of a vast star-gemmed breast, beneath the cloudless but moonless sky. It was midnight. Young Morley was on watch; and like many young officers, felt so careless and easy in such a night, that he could scarcely keep his eyes open. Even when a very slight breath from the south'ard filled the sails, steadied them in their flapping, and taking them aback, gave the schooner stern-board, he

did not notice it, nor did the man at the helm—for men will never watch when the eye of the officer droops, on duty.

It was such a sleepy, quiet night, that after the hard work and anxious watches of previous nights, it seemed almost excusable to be careless.

Suddenly, however, a man more wakeful than the rest came aft, and touching the young officer on the arm, said, in a low tone:

"I heard the creaking of a block and the rattle of running rigging, or something like it, just now, to the eastward, sir!"

The young officer sprang from the coil of rigging against which he had been leaning, rubbed his eyes, and asked the man to repeat his remarks.

"There's a vessel somewhere away on our larboard bow, or ahead of us, sir," said the man.

The officer looked away in the direction pointed out, but could discern nothing in the dim, hazy atmosphere of the night.

"You must be mistaken, I can see nothing," said the officer, after a second glance all around the vessel.

"I'll take my oath, sir, that I heard the sounds; and they were not aboard of this vessel," said the man.

"Shift your helm to port there," said the officer to the man at the helm. And he was about to give an order to the watch to tend the braces, and trim the yards in his usual loud tone, when his ear caught sounds that made him pause and listen.

Distinctly he heard the order: "Brace in the head-yards—brace up the after-yards! Shift your helm there, you lubber, don't you see we're aback?"

And following this order, he distinctly heard the sound of running cordage, the creak of the bracing yards, and knew that a vessel was but a short distance away; but as she could not be seen, of course her size, class, or nation was unknown.

Without permitting any noise to be made on deck, he had the entire crew aroused as silently as possible, and sent for the captain. Every light was hidden, and the men quietly sent to their quarters, while the vessel, through the action of the helm, fell off so that her sails filled, and very slowly; but with full steerage-way she moved through the water.

When Captain Seawaif reached the deck, he found that the vessel in this perfect silence had been fully prepared for action, and he warmly commended the young officer for his prudence and good conduct—for he did not know how near the poor fellow had been to that greatest of military offences, being caught asleep on post.

"Are you sure you heard the sounds of a vessel near us?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir, positive! And now, sir, look for yourself;" and suddenly the dim, ghost-white outlines of a ship were seen close on their weather-bow, standing the same way that they were, but under less canvas than themselves.

"Stand to your guns, men, and be ready to throw open your ports and act. Brownell, slew long Tom silently to bear upon the stranger," said the captain, in a low tone. "Be silent, fore and aft."

But in the movement of the large gun, or something, a noise was made which attracted the attention of the dull watch on board the other vessel; a bustle was heard there, and then a hail came from her in a gruff, hearty voice:

"Schooner ahoy! What vessel is that!"

"His Britannic Majesty's Schooner 'Coquette!' Who are you and where from?" replied Seawaif, without the slightest hesitation.

"His Britannic Majesty's Sloop-of-War 'Electra,' last from Jamaica, on a cruise! Keep company if you please till daylight, and I'll send an officer aboard for news!" replied the other.

"We'll keep company as long as you like, sir," replied Seawaif—"there are Yankees in these waters! There was one in sight of us at sunset," said Seawaif, at the same time saying "ready" to his gunners, and "put your helm aweather," to his helmsman.

"Whereaway?" asked the unsuspecting Englishman.

"Hereaway!" thundered Seawaif, as he gave the order to pour in his whole larboard broadside upon the enemy. Then luffing short up across the stern of the sloop-of-war, his starboard battery came in range, and completely raked her from stem to stern. Then shifting her helm apart, her bow fell to leeward, and

as he shouted: "Boarders and pikemen away!" the vessels closed, and with his own hands he helped to lash them together; and the next instant, at the head of his men, close followed by Doolittle and Morley, he sprang to the deck of the Englishman.

The latter, though entirely surprised, was not disposed to yield; and though the two broadsides had fearfully weakened his crew, and his deck was covered with the dead and dying, he made a most gallant defence. Only one watch—half the crew—had been on deck when the action opened, and now fresh men came up from below. But they were confused, and knew not whom they met as they came up the hatchways; and this gave the Americans an advantage which they needed, for they were not so many as those whom they so boldly strove to conquer.

Seawaif's voice and hand now heard and striking in the van, cheered on his desperate men. Doolittle, saying little, but clearing a wide path with his keen cutlass; and young Morley as active and fierce as a tiger—now fairly awake—drove the enemy gradually aft, until they had but narrow space of deck to fight upon. But two or three officers, gathering and cheering their crew, here made a most gallant stand. One was the commander of the ship, young, and therefore, probably a lord, to have attained rank so early; he fought with the recklessness of despair.

"Sweep the Yankees from the deck!" he shouted. "Sweep them away, my brave lads, for the honor of old England!"

"Ah—ha!" cried a shrill, glad voice, at this moment. "Ah—ha! I shall have plenty of amputat zis time!" and the doctor, with his long rapier in his hand, bounded to the side of his young commander, who at that moment was attacked by two of the enemy's officers—their leader being one.

"Shentilhommes, take partners for zis dance, if you please," said the doctor, as he quietly stepped in and engaged the British captain's attention, by a small eylet-hole in his clothes, in making which, his point grazed the Briton's ribs.

"Down with the frog-eater!" cried the Englishman, as he recognized the doctor's nationality by his words.

"In wiz ze frog stickare!" cried La Motte, gayly, as, with a skillful parry he evaded a fierce blow from the heavy cutlass of the other, and then, with a deadly lunge, passed his sword through the unfortunate captain's body until the very hilt struck heavily on his breast-bone.

Seeing their leader gone, and but two officers left, and they both wounded, the English crew became disheartened; and, after a few solitary and stubborn struggles, between single combatants, yielded; and the battle was over—the victory won.

"Now for ze amputat—now for ze ball extract! Ah—ha! zis is glorieuse!" cried the doctor, as he put his rapier away, and rushed after his instruments.

"Divide our crew and prepare to take charge of this ship as prize-master, Mr. Doolittle!" cried Seawaif. "Mr. Morley, you will see to putting all the prisoners in irons for the present, until we are secured!" he added, in a low tone. "Gentlemen," he continued to the British officers who had handed him their swords, "you will be pleased to accompany me on board the American privateer, 'Tyranicide!'"

"Taken by a privateer schooner, and ours one of the best sloops in his Majesty's service!" groaned the oldest officer, who had been first lieutenant of the prize. "It is all the better that Lord Stansbury fell, for his proud spirit never could have survived the disgrace of being captured by a Yankee privateer!"

"Our baggage?" said the other officer, as they followed Seawaif to the schooner's deck.

"Shall be sent for as soon as I have shown you to your quarters, gentlemen!" said Seawaif, politely. "The accommodations on board of a Yankee privateer," he added, with a marked emphasis on the words, "may not be as elegant as those on board of his Majesty's vessels of war (our republican simplicity hardly demands it) but we will ever be delighted to tender our hospitalities to his Majesty's officers!" And he led the way into a cabin more elegantly fitted up than that which they had recently left; for Mr. Phineas Cringle, though a business man, was a man of taste, and not niggardly in anything.

"If Yankee privateers look this way, and fight so well, what must we expect from their

men-of-war?" said the eldest officer, paying an involuntary tribute to his captors.

"Gentlemen, let me beg you to feel yourselves at home!" said the captain, pointing to seats. "Steward, get wine, liquor, and food for these officers. Excuse me, for a little while, gentlemen, I have duties to attend to on deck, and will then be at your service. I will also send the surgeon to you, directly."

"How deuced polite the Yankee is—like that cursed Frenchman, calling partners for a dance before he ran poor Stansbury through!" said the elder officer, as he watched the form of the gallant American passing up the companion ladder to the deck.

CHAPTER XVI.

The first thing which Seawaif did, after disposing of the captured officers, was to see personally to the security of his other prisoners and the state of the wounded of both vessels. The killed, of course, were past caring for, and only waited a sailor's winding-sheet—the wave. The doctor was in his glory, for the surgeon of the sloop-of-war had been slain, and he had the wounded of both vessels to attend to.

"How do you get along, doctor?" asked the captain, as he approached him.

"Ah! capital, *mon cher Capitaine*—capital!" said he, rubbing his bloody hands together. "I am up to ze eyes in fun! Plenty ze amputat, now!"

And he gleefully turned to a poor Englishman, whose leg, shattered close up to the thigh, had to come off.

The captain turned away to Mr. Doolittle, who, fortunately, as well as Mr. Morley, had come off without receiving any serious wound, and asked if he had selected his prize crew.

"How many shall I take, sir?" asked the lieutenant.

"It will take at least seventy-five men to work the ship into Salem and take care of the prisoners, for I shall only keep the officers with me," said Seawaif. "I will give you our boatswain and another good man to act as first and second mate for you. If you are chased, run into the nearest American port you can make; if you find you cannot escape with the vessel from a superior force, put your crew and prisoners into boats, on rafts, or any way you can, and blow up the ship before you allow her to be retaken. If possible, take her into Salem and tell Mr. Cringle that I will be there myself, after I've taken a few more prizes!"

"What 'll I do with such of their fellows as are hurt—we've only one doctor?" asked Doolittle.

"I'll take all that imperatively require surgical care," said the captain. "But we must hurry up matters and get the vessels apart—the wind is freshening, now, and by the way the air clears up, I shouldn't be surprised if we had a heavy blow from the southward. It will be a fair wind for you, and you may keep ahead of the heaviest of it, but my course lies east and south yet, for I'm in a lucky track, now, and mean to keep it!"

Everything was hastened as much as possible now. Mr. Morley having secured the prisoners, aided in having the damaged rigging of the sloop put in order, and in fitting her for her northern voyage. From her magazine, Captain Seawaif took all the ammunition which he needed, and also secured her colors, signal-books, and the uniforms of her captain and other officers, intending, if occasion required, or a ruse was demanded, to assume the character of an Englishman. He also took from her all the stores which he required, and when the two vessels were ready to separate, he was much better off for provisions, ammunition, and stores than he had been when he started from Salem.

It was nearly noon before the wounded were all on board the schooner and Doolittle ready to make sail on the corvette, and by that time the breeze was quite fresh from the south. With a hearty cheer exchanged between the crew of the "Tyranicide" and the prize crew on the other craft, the two vessels separated, and long before night, were out of sight of each other.

"Well, doctor, how do you feel?" asked Seawaif, in the evening, when La Motte, pale with his day's exertions, entered the cabin where he sat in company with the English officers.

"Very much fatigue, but very much delight!" said the doctor, helping himself to a glass of brandy. "I've amputat eleven leg, sixteen arm, and one neck!"

"One neck?" asked the captain.

"Yes sare—one neck. Ze man 'ave had his head all smash to pieces, it look so ragged, so very bad, zat I amputat it smooth, and make heem loo *sour comme il faut*, all nice! I do not like to see a job all botch up, *mon cher capitaine*!"

"How is it that you, who are a Frenchman, are on board of our enemy, when France is at peace with England?" asked one of the British officers.

"You ask because you wish an answer, eh, *Messieur*?" asked La Motte, while his eye twinkled mischievously.

"Of course, sir; that is what questions are generally asked for!" said the officer, rather touchily.

"Zen, sare, it is just because La Belle France is *not* at war wiz England zat I am here. My fazzar, when he died, left me one very rich heritage—a property zat I have accept and retain wiz all my heart. It was ze hatred of ze John Bull mens. He died while fighting wiz you. I hope to 'ave ze honor to do ze same! Shentilhommes, I drink you bon voyage!"

The Englishmen did not ask the doctor any more questions; for they saw that he was only too ready to answer them.

CHAPTER XVII.

It was a week later, and the saucy privateer did not look quite as gay and nice as she did when she came out of port, for she had just come out of a tremendous hurricane, in which, had it not been for management of the most consummate skill, and a nerve in the commander, and perseverance under peril and hardship, exhibited as well by the men as himself, which was wonderful, she would have gone to the bottom. He did not dare to put her away before the gale, for she lay so low in the water, and was so heavy with stores and metal, that the great seas would have swept her fore and aft. As it was, her bulwarks were considerably shattered, her upper works badly strained, both top-masts sprung, her rigging stretched, some of the sails blown away, and she needed refitting.

"I will not go back to Salem without another prize, but what port it is best to make, bothers me!" said Seawaif, in a conversation with young Morley, on the morning after the gale had broken.

"What is the nearest land, sir, by your reckoning?" asked the officer.

"Bermuda, by a long way!"

"But that is an English station, sir!"

"Yes; but with English colors, signals, and uniforms on board, I don't know but we could go in there to refit. I find, by a naval register which I took from the 'Electra', that there is a schooner on the East India station of exactly our tonnage and rig, even our number of guns, also, called the 'Tartar'—it will be also easy for us to assume the names of her officers, for she is far away, and our detection will be improbable. Thus I think we can refit at English expense, and no one but ourselves be the wiser, until we choose to enlighten them."

"The officers that we have on board would endanger us."

"Not if they give their honor not to do so—especially when they know that double irons, a berth in the hold, and gags in their mouths, would be the result of their refusal to keep silent!"

"Rather harsh usage for gentlemen in his Majesty's service, sir; but yet such as they would rather endure than aid in imposing upon their countrymen!" said the eldest English officer, who, being nearer than they supposed, had overheard their conversation.

"Have it as you will, sir!" replied Seawaif, sternly. "I go into Bermuda to refit, and if my prisoners wish to endanger me in any way, I shall take means to prevent it, harsh or not! You and your companion can remain as comfortable as you now are, on giving your words of honor not by any sign, word, writing, or act, to betray us; but if you refuse, the conversation you have listened to named the alternative!"

"For my part, I accept the alternative!"

said the officer. "My companion can choose for himself—captivity levels rank and I cannot order him to follow my example!"

"I do not require orders to make me perform my duty—I shall not shrink from following your example!" replied the other Englishman.

"Very well, gentlemen, I will make you as comfortable as I can, consistent with my own safety; but when we make the land, which I am now steering for, your present comforts and liberties will be much abridged!" said the captain. And he went into the cabin to consult his chart.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The dwellers at Bermuda were surprised, and pleased also, when, on the morning succeeding the day—or, rather, the evening—which embraced the incidents of our fourteenth chapter, they found that, during the night, a vessel of war, bearing the English flag, had entered their harbor, and come to anchor; for the advent of every visitor was, to so small a place, quite a godsend—especially if there were officers and men to spend their money on shore, and render the monotony of Bermuda life less than it was. If the old governor, Sir Humphrey, found any companions of his stripe, all of his subordinates had holiday; for he gave himself utterly up to enjoyment when he had company to suit his own ideas. That this visitor, a fine large war-schooner, meant to tender all of the civilities, was seen at once by the fact that, soon after sunrise, she thundered off a salute to the Governor; which he, in due time, returned, from the battery.

In about an hour or so, allowing time for him to have breakfasted, the commander of the schooner—a fine-looking, but rather pale and delicate young man, who announced himself as Arthur Sinclair, Lieutenant Commanding H. B. Majesty's schooner "Tartar," lately from the East, but now ordered on the West India station—came on shore, dressed superbly in a rich uniform, to pay his respects to the governor.

The latter had waited, with anxiety, to see what manner of man he was, and whether he would be likely to be a good bottle companion or not—for, beyond that quality, he had but little conception of the requirements of a man.

As the young officer advanced to the spot where the governor, in front of his house, accompanied by his secretary, awaited him, Sir Humphrey remarked to the latter, before the officer was in hearing

"The fellow is as white as my shirt! Two to one he can't tell port from sherry; five to one he can't bear brandy; ten to one he's a milk-sop!"

"Not by the flash of his eye," said the secretary, in a low tone; for he was a better judge of true humanity than the governor, even though he was a poor seventh or tenth cousin of the latter, and only held a secretary's post.

When Lieutenant Sinclair announced himself, the governor started, and seemed to eye him with an astonishment which betokened recognition; in fact, he was so confused that he hardly made a proper reply to the officer, when the latter told his name and rank.

"You speak and look as if you had seen me before; yet I am not aware of ever having had the honor to meet Sir Humphrey Dorset previous to this occasion," said the young officer, stiffly, in reply to an incoherent exclamation of the governor's.

"Excuse me, captain—that is, lieutenant—but you resemble so strongly a very dear friend of mine, whose daughter is at present under my roof, that, at first, I almost felt as if he lived again, though he has been dead for years. But likenesses are often accidental; there were never any Sinclairs connected with the Egertons or Dorsets, that I ever heard of. But, come in, sir; come in. Do you ever imbibe in the morning?"

Judging, from the "signs," that the governor did, the young officer had the good sense and proper knowledge of human character to make a good impression on Sir Humphrey's mind, by replying that he did "imbibe" occasionally, and should be most happy to go in and join him in a friendly glass.

"Come in—come in, sir; we'll take a little stimulant, by way of appetizing for lunch, and then I'll introduce you to my daughter and the Honorable Miss Egerton, who looks almost

enough like you to be a sister, though her hair, skin, and eyes are all lighter," said Sir Humphrey, leading the way.

"First of all, after having christened your hospitable side-board, sir, I must make inquiries about your means of enabling me to refit some spars that were carried away in a late hurricane; and also making some few other repairs."

"Oh, we've lots of spars in our spar-yard—rigging to spare, and riggers. There is nothing which you want that shall not be done!" said Sir Humphrey—believing that a man who was so willing to take a drink couldn't be quite a "milk-sop."

"You will dine with me to-day, will you not?—your officers, also?" asked the governor. "I have some old port that's as crusty as sea-foam, and as rich as blood! I suppose that you can tuck a bottle or two away, after a long cruise?"

"I am not a very fast hand with the bottle, but my surgeon makes up for all deficiencies on my part. He is a Frenchman, and volunteered in place of my regular surgeon, whom I lost by sickness. He will be but too happy to accept your excellency's invitation."

"And I only too happy to make his acquaintance. My dear sir, in this lonely spot, one can hardly estimate the value of a convivial companion. Where there is plenty of society, a ride after the hounds now and then, or a steeple-chase—why, one can exist without quite so much stimulant. But here, sir—here one must drink or die!"

The lieutenant smiled. He evidently knew his man; and deeming it best to please him, so far as he could, not only took a good nip of his liquor, but praised its quality; and also entered into a dissertation upon liquor generally, in which, either from reading, or otherwise, he was able to mention so many more kinds than the old baronet had known of, that the latter set him down, in his own mind, as one of the most learned men in the world.

After tasting several varieties of the Governor's wine and liquor, the lieutenant having hinted that he must return on board to arrange for his repairs, Sir Humphrey at last consented—insisting, however, upon a previous introduction to the ladies.

"Lieutenant Arthur Sinclair, my blossoms! My blossoms, Lieutenant Sinclair, of the 'Tartar!' You've heard of catching Tartars, haven't you? Well, here is a chance!" said the jolly governor, as he led the lieutenant into the ladies' drawing-room.

The lieutenant started, when he saw Miss Egerton, for he seemed to have met an old acquaintance; her face seemed strangely familiar to him. Yet, to speak truly, about the only female acquaintance that he had on earth, before that moment, was Kate Cringle; for his early life had been spent in solitude and study—his later days in hard and active duty at sea.

The lady, too, started and blushed; perhaps because his eager look was fixed so intently on her; perhaps from some unknown sympathy, some electric affection which we often feel, yet cannot account for.

Have you never felt, young reader, upon meeting one who was an utter stranger, an unaccountable, but not unpleasant thrill shoot through your heart and system, and a kind of soul-intelligence that the spirit of the stranger is akin to that within yourself? I have, if you have not.

But both were too well-bred to long exhibit a confusion for which neither could account; and the lieutenant, bowing as gracefully to the ladies as if he had been bred a courtier, rather than a rude sailor, entered into an easy and pleasant conversation with them, which soon made him and them feel as if they were not strangers.

The governor, having gone out to give his personal orders in regard to dinner—a matter of vast importance to him—Venona was enabled to give the lieutenant an introduction to their names, which the "blossom" idea of the governor had neglected; and, with a daughter's fondness and a lady's delicacy, she endeavored to apologize for her father's eccentricities. And Lieutenant Sinclair quite won her good graces by declaring himself delighted with the naturalness of her father, and his lack of ostentatious affectation. And he established himself with both as a pleasant and gallant gentleman, by the declaration that he regretted that his detention for repairs would be brief; for it would be hard to tear himself away from such charming society. Having gone suffi-

ciently far to produce, evidently, a very favorable impression, the young officer took his leave—remarking that, having engaged to dine with the governor, he should soon again have the happiness to meet them.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Isn't he 'a treasure trove'—isn't he angel-sent to us, lonely 'blossoms' on this desert isle?" said Venona to Lizzie, when the lieutenant had gone out.

The only answer which Lizzie made was a sigh. And though the color came and went upon her face, like shadows of light, rosy clouds over a field of flowers, her eyes were bent upon the floor, and she seemed to be in a dream.

"What is the matter, coz? Why, really, I believe you're in love!"

"Perhaps I am!" sighed Lizzie, abstractedly, as if she scarcely knew what she was saying.

Venona burst out in a gay laugh, and cried:

"Well, here is a case of love at first sight in reality. I always thought that such things existed only in the ideal of a poet or novel-writer's brain! What will become of your uncle's pet, poor Captain Morris?"

"I know not, care not; I only feel, and I cannot account for it—a wild, uncontrollable sympathy—perhaps it is love for this officer, stranger though he be!"

"Well, he's a handsome man, at any rate! By the way, though his eyes and hair are darker, his features greatly resemble yours, and there is something in his expression greatly like your own when you are thoughtful, and a little inclined to have the blues! I've often heard that husband and wife are found to look alike, if well matched!"

"He will never be my husband—I shall never marry!" said Lizzie, with a deep sigh.

"Pshaw! how long since you turned prophetess?" said Venona, with another smile. And as Lizzie made no answer, she added: "I hope there is some other handsome young officer on board of Lieutenant Sinclair's vessel for me to fall in love with, so that I can echo your sighs. I am sorry that I did not make the inquiry; and if there was, had not asked him to bring him ashore with him!"

"Well, blossoms, how did you like the young officer?" asked the governor who, having given his dinner commands, now felt contented.

"Very well, dear father—Lizzie—"

A look of entreaty from Lizzie checked Venona just in time, and she added:

"Lizzie don't think he's half as interesting as Captain Morris!"

"Tut, tut! Morris is a milk-sop. Gives n over a single bottle! The lieutenant is worth ten of him. You'll see at dinner-time. Why, he knows more about wine than I do! Dress yourselves up nice, blossoms—the surgeon is a Frenchman, and used to the modes de Paris, I suppose!"

"A French surgeon on board of an English man-of-war? Is not that strange?" asked Lizzie, who, in her relationship to a commodore, had become pretty well acquainted with the customs of the service, and the class of officers in it.

"He is a volunteer; the regular surgeon died somewhere on their cruise!" said the governor, by way of explanation.

"Are there any other young and handsome officers on board besides Lieutenant Sinclair?" asked Venona, demurely.

"Why, blossom, why?" asked the governor.

"Only I thought the more the merrier!" said the pretty one, gayly.

"Yes; so far as it goes! But no falling in love, blossom—no falling in love, mind ye! For, you know, I've made up my mind never to part with ye—never—never! Why, I'd be as lost without you as a parson without a clerk or a —"

"Governor without his bottle of old port!" said the laughing daughter, interrupting him with a kiss.

CHAPTER XX.

"Well, captain, how do things look ashore—any danger of detection?" asked young Morley (now acting as first officer of the "Tyrrannicide," which vessel, under the assumed name of the "Tartar," now lay in the harbor of Bermuda) of Seawaif, alias Lieutenant Sinclair.

"Everything is right there, my dear Beverly!" said Seawaif, addressing Morley by his proper alias, according to the register found on board of the "Electra." "The governor of the island is a jolly old soul, whose chief end is the emptying of bottles. We can refit without danger, but it is best to be in a hurry, for we know not who or what may enter the harbor; and our time is too precious to ourselves and our country to be wasted in idleness!"

"True, sir; as soon as spars can be got, I am ready to refit them. I have got gangs of men at the rigging now!"

"So I see! Your diligence is most commendable!" replied Seawaif. "How do the prisoners like confinement?"

"Ill enough; but there is no help for it. I would not trust them now, sir, on their honor! I have put a double guard over them, because I detected them in the attempt to bribe one of our men to convey a note on shore!"

"Ha! Did they try that? Then we cannot be too rigid. Let none but the most faithful men be put on guard over them. I did intend that you should accompany the doctor and myself to dine with the governor to-day; but either you or I must remain constantly on board. I will have our repairs hurried all that I can; for we are too close under their battery in case of discovery, for safety or comfort!"

"Yes, sir, that is true!"

"Where is the doctor?" asked the captain.

"Here, at your service, *mon cher capitaine*!" said La Motte, at that instant coming on deck.

"I have an invitation for you to dine with the governor—he is a jolly old gentleman—keeps good wine, and has a pretty daughter!" said Seawaif, with a smile.

"Eh bien, I shall dine with him, pay particular attention to his wine, and lay myself at ze feet of his daughter!"

"Look out that you do not lay yourself at the feet of his table—he thinks nothing of drinking three or four bottles!"

"Ah, I fear not zat, Monsieur le capitaine; I've very strong head for ze wine—but very weak heart for ze ladies! I forget when I see zem zat zey are not all angels, and I sink zat ze more soon I fall down on my knee to worship zem, ze more near am I to heaven!"

"One thing you must not forget, doctor!" said Seawaif. "We are now representing a British man-of-war—I am Lieutenant Sinclair, Mr. Morley is Beverly, and we were last from the East Indies!"

"Certainment, I shall remember all zat, mon cher Monsieur Sinclair. I shall not forget ze 'Tartare,' nor noosing else. But, by gar, I do not like to wear ze John Bull uniform—it feel like I've ze *eech* on my back, and I sink all ze time I must scratch, scratch, like did ze Duke of Argyle in ze old times!"

"You'll not have to wear it long, doctor; we will be at sea again in a few days, if nothing happens!" said the captain, who could not avoid laughing at the *ucky* idea of La Motte.

The foreman of the spar-yard now came off, by the orders of the governor, to see what the schooner required; and the young captain busied himself until the dinner hour in superintending matters on board. He also took occasion, by careless questioning, to find out all that he could about the governor, so as the better to be enabled to know how to keep on his right side, without attracting any particular attention. He found out that the young lady with golden ringlets and blue eyes was a ward and niece of Commodore Sir Peter Parker, that her father had been a British peer, and that she was heiress to considerable property; also, that she was expecting soon to return to England—for such matters as these are ever in some way known to the lower class of people; probably through the loquacity of servants, who, like their superiors, must talk and carry news. They'd hardly be human if they did not.

CHAPTER XXI.

The doctor proved a most delightful and acceptable guest to Sir Humphrey, for he left no heel-taps, and filled to his host as freely a half-hour after the ladies, accompanied by Seawaif (or Sinclair, as they knew him) had left the table, as he did when the first glass had been filled for him.

When the good baronet rather animadverted upon the haste with which the lieutenant had left, to evade the bottle, the doctor said:

"You must excuse Monsieur Sinclair, if you please, Governor—, he has an affection of ze heart zat forbid his drink very much ze wine! But, sare, wiz a great deal pleasure I will drink for him and for myself! It give me one grand delight to drink wiz such an amiable shentilhomme as yourself."

And the doctor verified his words by emptying his glass quite as frequently as did his delighted host.

Meanwhile, engaged in pleasant conversation, the lieutenant and the ladies walked out into the lovely garden and the adjacent grove, where a soft breeze and agreeable shade made the atmosphere delightful.

After having led the way to a romantic bower which overlooked the sea, Venona suddenly declared that Mr. Sinclair must hear her friend, Miss Egerton, sing; and, hastening to the house to get a guitar, left the lieutenant and Lizzie seated alone in the vine-embowered place.

"The sea is very beautiful—though I could not bear to live upon it always, yet I should like to dwell where I could look upon it, when I should most dread to be upon it, when lashed into furious grandeur by a storm!" said Lizzie, as together they glanced upon the waters now dancing in the sunlight.

"It has been my fate always to live within sight of or upon it," said Seawaif; then, as if he feared that such a statement might lead to further and embarrassing questions regarding his place of nativity, parentage, etc., he suddenly changed the theme, and asked:

"Are you fond of music, lady?"

"I am, sir—who that has a soul is not? It is the poetry of sound which most enchants our senses!"

"Most true, lady," said he, "yet as natures differ in regard to all things, so do tastes in music. For instance," he added, with a nonchalance which would have implied him quite an adept in telling a "white lie," "the East Indians whom I lately left, thought that there was nothing more musical or pleasant than the clangor of a hundred brazen gongs. Upon one occasion, when our squadron was at Calcutta, the Admiral sent the full band on shore to serenade a Rajah. They played their most exquisite pieces, and after they had at last retired, a European gentleman, who had been with the Rajah during the performance, asked which piece had most pleased him."

"Oh! that which they played when they first entered the court-yard," said the Rajah.

"He had been most pleased with the discordant noise made by tuning the instruments!"

Venona, who had been absent, Lizzie thought, much longer than was necessary after the guitar, now returned; and, handing her the instrument, asked her to sing and play.

The young lady, with that true gentility which scorns the mawkishness of unnecessary excuses and hesitations, took the guitar, and, after placing its strings in chord, sung to a pleasant accompaniment these words:

I.
"Oh! were I a bird, all lightly and free
I would spread my glad wings over the sea;
I'd play with the surge and skim o'er the foam,
I would love the old ocean—make it my home—
When weary at night I'd sink on its breast,
And let its low murmurs lull me to rest!"

II.
And if in darkness a storm should arise,
And enveloped be both the sea and the skies,
Away I would fly to some flowery isle,
And there would I tarry in safety the while,
Till the clouds were gone by out of the sky,
And the rainbow's arch shone brightly on high.

III.
"No ocean too wide for the spread of my wing,
No clime, whose praises I'd falter to sing,
No bower, whose sweets I would not inhale,
No beauty on earth I'd not strive to unveil,
Not a blossom below or a star up above,
That I'd not look at, and cherish, and love."

Nothing could be more exquisitely rich and soft than the voice of Lizzie, when she sung this song of her own composition, and Seawaif was not only delighted with it, but so expressed himself, and begged her to continue.

She, wishing to have the accomplishments of Venona, also, known and appreciated, now requested the latter to join her in a favorite *duetto*, which she did, and the young officer, who was passionately fond of music, was gratified to his heart's content.

Hours thus flew unheeded by, and it was sunset ere they thought of returning to the house.

After leaving the ladies in the drawing-room, the young commander thought of returning to his vessel, and inquired of a servant where the doctor was. Being told that the latter and the baronet were still in the dining-room, and hearing a clatter of glasses and shouts of laughter in that direction, he went upon sound, and opening the door, saw a sight worthy the sketchy pencil of a Hogarth, with a Lever to describe it.

The doctor and the baronet, both as "tight" as men could be and keep their legs, were dancing around a pile of empty bottles, which proved their valor and capacity as bottle knights. The doctor had put his wig on top of the pyramid, and sans coat and vest, looked strangely thin and lean to hold so much liquid unaided by any process of evaporation—for he was not fat enough to sweat.

The baronet had also taken off his coat and wig; and, being in bulk the opposite of the doctor, he made a rare sight, the reader may rest assured. Thus leaping, the one like a wild Camanche, the other like a fat and fanatical Shaker, now reeling into each other's arms and embracing, then staggering off in "eccentrics," singing each a different song to a different tune, they were ending their carousal when the young officer entered.

La Motte, who was not so far gone as the baronet, rather sobered down when Seawaif appeared; but Sir Humphrey, with a "view halloo," rushed forward and seized him, shouting: "You're my prisoner, Sinclair—you're my prisoner; yield ye, and ransom yourself over a fresh bottle. Come, no resistance—me and the doctor have tucked away a dozen bottles, and are good for more yet—ain't we, doctor?"

"If we can hold more; yes, sare, certainment. If not, I've one leetle *emetic* which we can partake, zen we can begin again!"

"It is sunset, and we must go on board," said the captain, quietly, but firmly.

"Ah! yes, certainment; I've forget my patients. I must go to ze board of ze 'Tartare,'" said the doctor.

"One bottle before you go—one, just to give you an appetite to come again!" said the baronet.

With great difficulty, the urgent solicitations of the baronet were evaded; and, at last, in the dusk of the evening, Seawaif succeeded in excusing himself and the doctor, and went on board. Not, however, until he had promised to make his visits frequent at the house of the governor—a promise which he had fair reasons for intending to comply with.

CHAPTER XXII.

A few moments after the two officers last spoken of had gone on board of their vessel, Venona, who had gone as usual to coax her father to retire, to sleep away the effects of his potations, returned from the consummation of her object, and found Lizzie standing where she first saw her, on the piazza, looking off toward the dark-hulled vessel, as she seemed to lie sleeping on the still water of the harbor.

"Love's young dream—love's young dream!" she said, playfully, as she came up behind the pretty blonde, and kissed her white neck. "Do you like the lieutenant as well upon a longer acquaintance as at first sight? Do you think he will wear well?"

Again Lizzie's only answer was a sigh.

"Has the dear child lost her tongue, as well as her heart?" asked the bantering girl.

"You can talk enough for both, dear Venona!" said Lizzie, with a quiet smile. "If I did not answer whatever question you asked, it was because I was so lost in thought that I did not understand you!"

"Lost in thought, sweet coz? Ten to one, as father says, I can tell of whom and what you were thinking?"

"Well, tell me!"

"Well, you was thinking of this Arthur Sinclair?"

"Right so far, fair tease; but what were the nature of my thoughts?"

"You was thinking, Lizzie, whether he would give you his heart in exchange for yours?"

"Wrong there, my gentle lady! I feel as if I had somewhere met him before—I cannot chase away the thought—he does not seem like a stranger to me!"

"Did you question him as to his wherefroms and where-he-has-beens?"

"No—I feel so embarrassed in his presence—there is such a strange fluttering about my heart when he is talking to me, that I cannot think of anything! He must deem me very stupid!"

"Anything but that coz, to judge from the compliments that he paid you, and the rapt attention with which he listened to your songs!"

"That was no more than any courteous gentleman would do, I am sure!"

"But Lieutenant Sinclair feels more than every 'courteous gentleman' would—he loves you, coz!"

"Do you really think he does, Venona?" asked Lizzie, with a sigh.

"Really and truly I do, fair coz; but why should you look gloomy about that?"

"Because, in candor, dear Venona, I begin to fear that I love him; and yet a strange presentiment fills my heart that our love will be unfortunate! Even if he loves me, something tells me that he can never be my husband!"

"Pshaw, dear coz! Drive such foolish fancies from your mind—I shall dance at your wedding soon!"

"You may weep at my funeral sooner!" sighed Lizzie.

"You shall not talk such gloomy nonsense!" said Venona, affectionately, as she kissed the sad girl.

"Come, let us go up to my room and practice some music. If you will, when all is still to-night, I'll get cousin Tom, pa's secretary to row us off in the harbor, and we will serenade your new beau! Tom can play upon the flute admirably, you can touch the light guitar, and we will sing him some of our sweetest songs! Do you not like the idea?"

"If it pleases you, dear Venona, yes!"

"Well, it shall be done. Go to your room, and I'll go and speak to Tom. He is a good soul, and will do anything to please me, though I tease him sadly sometimes!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

A moonlit night in a southern clime is ever more beautiful than in the drearier regions of the north. The balmy softness, the pellucid clearness of the atmosphere, seem to brighten everything. And even when the moon has waned, if there are no clouds to hide their faces from the flowery earth or mirroring waters, the stars send down great floods of silvery light, and seem to glory in the absence of their queenly rival.

Starry, cloudless, soft, and dreamy, was the first night on which the "Tyrannicide," under a tyrant's flag and a tyrant's mask, lay in the little harbor of Bermuda. Warned to be upon the alert, her treble anchor-watch were awake, while all of the regular watch slept on deck, with their weapons by their side, ready to be grasped at a moment's notice. Below, watchful sentinels were guarding those who, like chained beasts, groaned for the power to rend their captors.

Young Morley, lulled by the sighing breeze which made the rigging its harp-strings; the gentle waters, which tinkled a silvery symphony, and the almost quiet of all around him, though not sleeping, was dreaming dreams of fairy-land.

Suddenly an old tar, with a weaselish eye, who stood near him, touched his shoulder, and pointed to a small boat, which seemed to be creeping noiselessly toward the vessel; that there were three persons only in it, he could easily discern; also that two of them were dressed in the kind of apparel usually worn by females. What their errand was at that midnight hour was beyond his knowledge; but resolving to speedily know, he was about to hail the boat, or rather its crew, when the low, soft wail of a flute arose so sweetly on the still air, that he almost held his breath to listen. Rising, falling like the voices of the spirits of the

air, all full of melting harmony, the liquid notes rolled over the water. None but a master of the art which "soothes the savage," and renders man one-half divine, could make such music. The crew, like their officer, listened as if spell-bound. No wonder that we read of old how sirens charmed poor mariners from their course—alas! woe's me, they've done it in more modern days than those!

Suddenly the prelude of the flute was hushed, and two delicious female voices, alto and soprano, sung these words:

I.

"Slumber sweetly—slumber while you may;
The calm will not exist away—
The storm that sleeps may soon awake—
The spell that binds, an hour may break.
Slumber, slumber, seamen true and brave—
Slumber, slumber, children of the wave

II.

"The spirits good, and angels bright
Will guard and bless your dreams to-night;
But, ere you see another sun,
Their mission may be wrought and done.
But slumber, slumber gently, you
Whose home is on the ocean blue!

The singers ceased, and the echoes of their harmonious voices seemed themselves to sink away into sleep.

Young Morley, whose soul was full of music and poetry, seemed inspired, and in a voice rich with manly harmony, he improvised and sang this reply:

I.

"Who can slumber, who can slumber
When the angels are awake?
Who so heartless, who so soulless,
As the magic spell would break?
Who can listen to such music,
Believing not that 'tis divine?
Who can love it half so well as
We poor children of the brine?

II.

"Let your numbers, softly flowing,
Sweeten still the sighing air;
Let your voices, tuned in heaven,
Waft aloft the sailor's prayer;
Let them bear his memory homeward
On the bosom of the wind,
To the music of the loved ones
He was forced to leave behind."

"Heavens! What a voice! It has found an echo and a home within my heart," exclaimed Venona, unconscious that the tide had drifted the boat close under the stern of the schooner, and that she was so near to the singer that her words would reach his ear. But his reply to her words—"and thine in mine, sweet lady," told her that her expression had been heard—that her feelings were reciprocated. Blushing, trembling, she whispered to her cousin to row away, and she sang no more that night.

"I did not know that you were a poet as well as a musician, Morley!" said Seawaif, at this moment, touching the entranced officer upon the shoulder.

"Forgive me, if I have neglected my duty and did not hail the boat, sir—but that music was so heavenly that!"

"You would have been utterly inexcusable, if you had not appreciated it and acted as you have done," said Seawaif, gently. "To-morrow you shall make the acquaintance of your charmer. She is the governor's daughter, and very beautiful; but I will now relieve you in your watch, and let you go below to dream of her, for I see that their boat has rowed away."

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was a week later; and in two different parts of the garden-grounds of Sir Humphrey Dorset, scenes were being enacted, parts in our drama, which I do not think it right should be withheld from my readers, even though politeness would bid us not to break in upon them.

In the bower that overlooked the sea, of which we have before made mention, Edward Seawaif, still only known to her as Arthur Sinclair, was seated with Lizzie Egerton, and while he held her hand in his, he was pouring out the torrent of his new-born love in a gushing fountain of words. And like the music of sweet waters falling upon the ear of a thirsty traveler, those words came to her, and she drank them in.

"Lady, sweet lady," said he, "this confession of feelings, which I cannot restrain, has been altogether unpremeditated—had I let rea-

son, rather than feeling prompt me, the words which I have uttered had yet been unsaid—for I know not but that you will scorn, loathe, hate me!"

"Hate you? Oh, never, never!" she said, while blushes came all over her face like sunlight on a bed of roses. And she did not offer to take from him, the hand which he so warmly pressed.

"I am not what I seem, lady," said he, abruptly. "I cannot deceive you—I am an American!"

"And false to your country, which is struggling for freedom?" she asked, while she made an offer to withdraw her hand from his.

"No, lady—no!" he replied, proudly. "Even if the confession should endanger my life, or lose what is dearer still, the hope of your love—I will not deny it. I am an American, in the service of my country, and at this moment am in this port, disguised, only that I can refit and again sail upon a cruise to meet, as I have met, the enemies of my country!"

"The confession will not endanger you, sir; but it endears you to me. All of my sympathies are and have been with the rebels, as they are falsely termed, though it has not been politic for me to express them."

"Bless you lady—bless you, angel that you are! Your words have removed a load of wretchedness from my heart, for I could not bear to deceive you, yet I dared not reveal my secret. I must soon sail—may I go with the knowledge that I am not unloved by you, and the hope that at a more auspicious day I can claim the hand which I hold?"

"You can!" said Lizzie, gently, but firmly.

One kiss, pure as it was fond, given and received, sealed that promise, and perhaps more would have been added, had not Mr. Morley been seen advancing with Venona leaning upon his arm in a most confiding, if not in an affectionate manner.

In a few moments they had reached the bower, where they were about to sit down, when the governor approached, and, speaking to Seawaif, said:

"The look-out reports a sail in the offing, lieutenant—he says she looks like a large ship-of-war under jury masts!"

"I must look for myself—this port is rather near the Yankee coast—excuse Mr. Beverley and myself, ladies," said the officer addressed; and accompanied by the governor and Morley, he walked away.

"Beverley is not his name!" said Venona, abstractedly. "He has deceived me—he is a rebel, and yet how I love him!"

"Be cautious, then, how you betray his secrets," said Lizzie, as she gently passed her arm around Venona's waist.

"Do you know that the 'Tartar' is not the 'Tartar'? That both of our lovers are Americans?" asked Venona.

"Yes, and glory in it!" replied Lizzie. "They are far more worthy of our love, because they dare to resist wrong and oppose tyranny."

Venona said no more, but threw herself upon the bosom of her friend, and wept tears of joy.

CHAPTER XXV.

Seawaif and Morley, after visiting the look-out tower upon the roof of the governor's house, and taking a long look at the vessel which had been reported, made their excuses to Sir Humphrey, and as quickly as they could do it without exciting notice by their haste, started for their vessel.

"Did you recognize the ship outside, sir?" asked the younger officer.

"I think she is the ship which we engaged off Nantucket. Her foremast is gone, only a topmast in its place for a jury mast; her other spars have suffered probably in the gale which troubled us, and being further out, she has been longer getting in!" replied Seawaif.

"The same idea struck me, sir, the moment that I looked at her. Will there not be danger that her officers will recognize our vessel?"

"It is possible, and we must be ready to act upon any emergency that occurs. She is now too near the mouth of the harbor for us to run out without coming under her guns, and so heavy a battery as hers would speedily sink us, if the suspicions of her officers once aroused should subside into a certainty. We must brazen the matter out to the best of our ability, and be ready to fight or run, as neces-

sity or prudence dictates. Of one thing I am very glad—we are completely refitted, and are ready for sea at a moment's notice!"

"That is so, sir!" said the officer, with a sigh.

"You sigh because you will have to leave the beautiful Venona?" said Seawaif, with a smile.

"I confess it, sir; but I shall not be solitary in my regrets!" said Morley, with an arch look at his companion.

"That is true—but this war will not last forever. When our country has gained her independence, we will probably find an opportunity to lose our own!"

The officers having now arrived at the landing, were met by the boat for which they had signaled, and soon were on board of their vessel. There, quietly, without any action which would betoken an intention to get underway, which could be noticed from shore, every preparation was made to slip the cable at a moment's notice. The sails had been furled with slipping gaskets which in an instant could be cast adrift, without even sending a man aloft. With a proper breeze, the schooner could have been got underway and under full sail in less than three minutes. Her guns, also, had been double-shotted from the time when the salute had been fired; and she was ready at any time for an immediate and desperate defence.

The moment that Seawaif got on board, he took his glass, and kept it fixed upon the approaching ship, which was now slowly coming in through the narrow and crooked channel made by the coral reefs which guarded the harbor.

"There is the old friend that you peppered off Nantucket, Mr. Brownell!" said the young captain to his gunner, as the dismasted ship advanced.

"So I see, sir!" replied the gunner. "I should like to have a half-dozen cracks at her in this smooth water—I'd put her out of the way of propelling, even under juremasts!"

"Doubtless, if she had not a chance of throwing twenty shots to our one. We are not out of her range, now!"

The crew of the "Tyrannicide" were all on deck now, looking at the huge fifty-gun ship that approached, and occasionally glancing at the face of their captain, to see if he felt more secure in his disguise than they did.

But, as ever, even in the hour of darkest peril, he was so calm, quiet, and confident in his look, that no new fears arose in their breasts. If he, who knew so much, saw no cause of alarm, why should they, more ignorant, find reason for fear?

In a short time, the British ship stood along close under the stern of the schooner, and there, taking in all sail except the spanker and mizzen top-sail, put her helm hard-a-lee, and luffing to the wind, brought up for anchorage.

Seawaif had for some time observed that the attention of several officers on board of the English vessel was very much devoted to his schooner, and he expected—in truth, rather wished—to be hailed from the ship as she passed him. But he was not; and, to speak truly, he did not feel perfectly easy when she anchored within pistol-shot of him, having a broadside of twenty-five guns bearing directly upon him. But he did not allow his face to express the least sign of apprehension, and when the men were furling sails on board of the other ship, seemed to look at their work with an eye only professional, and as calm as a breezeless sea.

CHAPTER XXVI.

When H. B. M. ship "Bristol" first sighted the harbor of Bermuda and the vessels therein, Captain Morris, spy-glass in hand, took his position forward, to "see how the land lay," and to reconnoitre. His eye had not long rested upon the rakish-looking schooner, which now, all right below and aloft, lay at her single anchor, when he called an officer to his side who had been with him in the boat expedition started off Nantucket, and handing him the glass, asked him to look at the schooner, and say if he had ever seen anything like her before.

"The officer, after a long, steady look, replied:

"She is under English colors, but she is American built!"

"That is not what I asked you!" said Cap-

tain Morris. "Have you ever seen a vessel that looked like her before?"

"Yes, sir!" said the officer, after another steady look at her. "The craft that engaged us off Nantucket was about the same in size and build—looked like her in rig!"

"I believe it is her," said Morris.

"Can some of our cruisers have been so lucky as to take her already?"

"Of course, or how else should she be here, and under our flag? I would have given a ear's pay to have taken her myself!"

"She doesn't look as if she had suffered any in action—every spar is in its place, and she looks as neat below and aloft as if she'd just been launched and rigged," said the officer.

"All hands" were now called on board the "Bristol," to make ready for working ship and coming to an anchor, and the men and officers took their stations for the purpose; while the captain walked aft to his proper place on the quarter-deck.

In a short time, as stated in the foregoing chapter, the ship came to, and her sails were furled.

As soon as this was done, a boat was lowered, and a midshipman dispatched with the compliments of Capt. Morris, to ascertain when and where the vessel had been taken.

When the young officer boarded the schooner, he found Seawaif, alias Sinclair, in his full dress and elegant uniform, on the point of getting into his gig to be rowed on shore; for the latter wished to defer, as long as he could, an interview with the British commander—hoping to avoid an *éclaircissement* until night-fall, when, with a little aid from *Bonne Fortune*, he might slip out of danger.

"What does Captain Morris mean by asking such a question? Is he crazy or drunk?" asked Seawaif, with well-assumed anger. "Tell him this is his Britannic Majesty's Schooner 'Tartar,' Lieut. Arthur Sinclair commanding; and that after I have fulfilled an engagement to dine with the governor on shore, I shall take occasion to visit him, and ask the meaning of such questions. Tell him that, if he means them for a joke, I think such jokes deuced impertinent, and know how to resent them!"

Thus saying, he flung himself angrily into his boat, and was rowed to the shore, having previously given Morley orders how to act; and how, without attracting attention, to signalize him at every emergency.

When the midshipman returned and reported to Captain Morris, the latter, for a moment, looked completely nonplussed.

"The 'Tartar'?" said he. "Bring me the Register!"

It was done; and after a glance at it, he said:

"The 'Tartar' is on the East India station!"

"The officer of the deck on board of the schooner—her first lieutenant I believe—said they were just from the East India station, sir!" said the midshipman.

"But the 'Tartar' is down here as built in Portsmouth," said Captain Morris, "and if that craft there isn't Yankee built, I'm a monkey! Why the deuce don't her commander come on board to report to me, himself?"

"He said he was going to dine with the governor, sir!" meekly responded the midshipman.

"Curse the governor and him too," said the captain—just as a pale, slender individual, dressed in citizen's dress, stepped on board and advanced to him. "Who are you?" he added, to the latter person.

"The secretary of Sir Humphrey Dorset, whom you were just cursing," said "cousin Tom," very quietly.

"Do you know what schooner that is?" asked the captain, subsiding a little.

"Yes, sir—the 'Tartar,' she has been here these two weeks, refitting!"

"What vessel brought her in?"

"None—her commander came in without any company!"

"There is a mystery here, and by the gods of war, I'll unravel it!" said Morris, bitterly. "Have all hands called!" he added to an officer. "Now, sir, what do you want?" he asked of the secretary, not in a very amiable tone.

"The governor sent me on board to ask what vessel this was and what news you had; but if I am to be treated as if I was a black-guard instead of a gentleman, I'll let him do his own errands," said "cousin Tom," indignantly; and turning on his heel, he went over the side to his boat, and ordered the crew to pull him on shore.

"By the Fates! things are coming to a pretty pass, when a captain in the British

Navy must be snubbed by the beggarly secretary of a Hampshire baronet!" muttered the captain, as he saw the young man leave.

"The crew are mustered, sir," said his executive officer, at this moment.

"Very well, sir," replied the captain.

"Is there any man or officer on board of this ship," he continued, "who has ever served on board of a vessel which I find named in the Register as the schooner 'Tartar'?"

"I never sailed aboard of her, your honor," said an old seaman, coming forward, holding his hat in one hand and tugging at a fore-lock of his hair with the other. "But I seed her launched, and helped to rig her!"

"Does that craft look like her?" asked the captain, pointing to the "Tyrannicide."

The old seaman turned the quid in his cheek, looked steadily at the schooner while he settled his hat on his head again, then after hitching up his trousers, said:

"She's the same rig, sir—about the same size and number o' barkers—but she's a great deal sharper in the hull fore and aft than the 'Tartar' I knew!"

"That will do! You can turn the hands down again. Have a constant eye kept on that schooner, and if she offers to move from her anchor without my permission, sink her on the instant," said he to his first officer. "I will go on board of her myself, and see if I cannot unravel this mystery."

The gunner of the ship now approached him.

"Mr. Swab," said Captain Morris, "do you recognize that craft?"

"If she hasn't a couple of holes through her fore and main-sails that I pitched iron through the other day when we were off Nantucket, I don't, sir," said the gunner.

"That is a fact—we did make daylight through her canvas. I'll soon see if she hasn't got our mark," said the captain, ordering his gig to be manned.

CHAPTER XXVII.

When Morley saw the captain of the British ship, whom he recognized to be such by his uniform, coming toward the schooner, he had the side-boys at the gangway, and attended there himself in true man-o'-war's-man's style, and received Captain Morris at the gangway as formally and politely as any other officer could have done.

"My name is Morris—captain in His Britannic Majesty's navy," said the former, very stiffly, as he stood on the deck of the schooner.

"Captain Morris is very welcome on board of the 'Tartar.' I am Lieutenant Beverley, at his service," said Morley, bowing. "Permit me, in the absence of Lieutenant Commanding Sinclair, to invite you into the cabin, to take a glass of wine, sir?"

The young officer did the honors so coolly, that Morris was more than ever bothered.

"When were you off Nantucket shoals last?" he asked, abruptly.

"Our course from the East Indies brought us a long ways to the southward of the latitude you mention!" said Mr. Morley, quietly.

"You have very heavy lower-masts! I should like to see the spread of canvas in your fore and mainsails; will you loosen them, if you please?" asked the cunning commander, thinking, without a doubt, that he had the proof he wanted now at hand.

"Certainly, sir!" said Morley, giving the necessary orders.

"New canvass!" said Morris, with a disappointed air, as the foresail was loosened from its brails and furling-line, and the mainsail hoisted.

"Yes, sir. Our old ones were blown away in a hurricane, just before we made port."

"Blown clear away—didn't you save the canvas, sir?" asked Morris, still in hopes of seeing the convicting shot-holes.

"Not a yard, sir; it was a terrible blow! But you forget the wine, sir; we have some very fine—we got it on our way out."

The British officer was nonplussed, but far from satisfied. He felt certain that the schooner was sailing under false colors; but he meant to act with circumspection, and secure proof of it before he adopted ultimate measures. Therefore he went into the cabin and took a glass of wine in a courteous manner, but asked no more questions from Morley, who was so perfectly on his guard and composed, that he saw a cross-examination would not affect him.

"Your commanding officer has gone on shore, I understand?" said he.

"Yes, sir—to dine with the governor."

"Although self-invited, on the strength of a slight acquaintance with Sir Humphrey Dorset, I believe I will do the same," said Captain Morris; and, politely bowing to Morley, he again entered his boat, which he steered toward the landing.

"It is evident that he suspects us!" muttered Morley, as he watched the receding boat. "I wish we were out of this scrape!"

The doctor, who had been engaged in something or other in his state-room, now came on deck.

"What would you think, doctor, if that ship should open her batteries on us as we lie?" asked the young officer, while he pointed to the "Bristol."

"I should imagine zat very soon I should 'ave plenty of ze amputat!" said the doctor, as he took a pinch of snuff, and shrugged up his shoulders.

"She'd sink us before you could take a leg off!" said Morley, quietly.

"Ah! ha! You sink zat? I can take off a leg so quick as you wink your eye? But pardon, Monsieur Morley, I 'ave ze desire for one boat. I am to dine wiz ze governare."

"The captain begged me to say that he would make your excuses to the governor, as we might expect to sail at a moment's notice."

"Ah, mon Dieu! What will ze governare do for somebody to get intoxicate wiz?" sighed the doctor, and he retired to the cabin to seek consolation for himself in a solitary glass of *eau de vie*.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Ah, my dear Sinclair, I am delighted to see you back so soon! You come to dine, of course?" said Sir Humphrey, when Seawaif rejoined him.

"Yes, Sir Humphrey. Your invitations are so kind, that I find it impossible to refuse them."

"Ah, thank ye, thank ye, my boy! Excuse my familiarity, but, d'y'e see, I've got almost to feeling as if you were one of my own family. Perhaps you may be yet—eh? The Egertons are our cousins, you know. Ha! ha! let's drink to Lizzie, the blossom! You can't refuse that toast, I know!"

"I have no desire to, I assure you!" said Seawaif, laughing, and accepting the eccentric baronet's invitation.

"By the way, where is the doctor—the glorious doctor?" said Sir Humphrey.

"Unwell—he begs to be excused to-day. You've been rather too hospitable to him, Sir Humphrey. There are few who can sail in your company and carry so much canvas—spiritually speaking!"

"I thought he'd have a hard head if he could keep up with me in the long run, though he made a fair start—a very fair start!" said the baronet, delighted at the thought that his head was the strongest yet, though the doctor had apparently come off conqueror at each and every bout of the bottle.

"By the way, I forgot to ask what ship that was which came in? I sent my secretary to learn, and I see he is coming back."

"It is the ship 'Bristol,' one Morris commanding; and to judge from the question she bade an officer ask me, he must be either a fool or a madman!" said Seawaif.

"Morris—yes, a milk-sop, I know him—he can't stand his second bottle. Sir Peter Parker wants Lizzie to marry him, but she hates him worse than poison! So do I!"

"And I, if he is after her," mentally ejaculated our hero.

"What's the matter, Tom? You look as red in the face as if you'd been at your second bottle!" said the governor to his secretary, who, flushed with anger, and half breathless with haste, approached.

"Matter enough, Sir Humphrey, when a saltwater pig, beg your pardon, Mr. Sinclair, I didn't mean you, sir, or the like of you—bad enough, sir, when a duff-fed lout dares to curse you, and insult your messenger!"

"Who dared to curse me, Tom—who dared to curse me?"

"Why, Captain Morris, of the 'Bristol,' sir."

"He did—did he? Then curse me, myself, if I don't make him answer for it! He'll want

to refit, provision, or something else—want to see Miss Egerton; but hang me if he shall! Go and walk with her, Sinclair, hang me if you shan't marry her while he is here, just to spite him! I'll make it right with Sir Peter afterward—she's my cousin, and I'll give her away. I'm not going to be cursed for nothing, by any he that sails, if he does wear a pair of epaulets! I'll call him out—but I'll wait till after dinner!"

"There, he is in his boat, leaving his ship now, sir!" said the secretary.

"Yes, and going on board of my schooner!" said Seawaif, watching affairs now with eager interest. He smiled when he saw the fore-and-aft sails loosened for inspection; for intuitively he understood the reason, and could imagine the curious captain's disappointment when he looked at the new canvas.

He did not, however, feel perfectly easy until he saw Morley bow the captain to the side, and saw the latter pulling toward the shore.

"The polite and amiable individual is going to pay you a visit, Sir Humphrey!" said Seawaif, with a smile. "Perhaps he'll invite himself to dine with you!"

"If he crosses his legs under my mahogany, I'll give him leave to curse me from now till doomsday!" said the choleric baronet. "But go you, my dear boy, and see Lizzie! It is her he comes to see, not me; and blow me into a bubble if he shall see her! I'll send him aboard of his ship with a flea in his ear!"

Seawaif, who had no desire to meet Morris either then or at any time, without he could do it fairly, and on blue water, very willingly obeyed the baronet's suggestion, and went to join the ladies in the garden.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"You are in danger, are you not? Suspected at least?" said Lizzie, anxiously, as Seawaif approached the spot where she and Venona were standing.

"Suspected, but not known!" he replied, quietly. "The only danger that I fear is, that I shall, all too soon, be obliged to leave society which has become very dear to me!"

"If it will only insure your safety, I care not for the separation, for it will only be temporary!" said Lizzie, earnestly. "If the nationality of your vessel should be discovered, she would be taken, and your own life would be in peril!"

"She shall not be taken. I have a favor to ask of you, ladies. Aid me in some way to keep this captain on shore and occupied as long as possible, for he does suspect me to be what I am, the very one who crippled his ship; and if he can fasten the matter on me, it will be a hard matter for me to get my vessel out from under his guns. But if I can keep him quiet, so that he sends no orders off to his vessel before night, with the aid of darkness, I hope to slip away from him!"

"That we can surely do, else woman's wit passes on false reputation, and is too highly rated!" said Venona. "But what is the ship, and who the officer whom I see with my father? The latter seems to be very mad about something!"

"The ship is the 'Bristol,' of Sir Peter Parker's squadron!" said Seawaif.

"What! my uncle arrived?" asked Lizzie, turning pale.

"No. Sir Peter has changed his flag to another ship, I presume; but Captain Morris is in command, and would be likely to show me few favors indeed, if he knew the state of my mind toward you, sweet lady."

"He can and must be managed; how, I know not—but it must be done," said Lizzie, thoughtfully. "Venona, do you go and keep him in check, if you can, until I can get my wits to work. If your father is quarreling with him, get them reconciled, and over a bottle of wine, if you can; and then join us again."

The warm-hearted daughter of the governor hastened to perform the duty allotted to her; while Seawaif and Lizzie passed on to a place more secluded from observation, where, uninterrupted, they could lay out a plan of operations.

While they are thus engaged, we will return to the governor.

"My dear Sir Humphrey, how do you do, sir?" exclaimed Captain Morris, as he approached the baronet, who, with his face red-

der than ever, and his frame quivering with anger, stood where Seawaif had left him.

"Very 'dear'!—very 'dear,' when a man that has no Sir to his name now, nor ever will have, can insult me one minute, and then come and fawn around me, like a hungry dog, the next! I s'pose you smell dinner, sir—yes, dinner, sir! If you do, smelling is as near as you'll get to it, sir! If it isn't, you may curse me, sir—me, Sir Humphrey Dorset, Governor of Bermuda, and cousin to the Honorable Miss Lizzie Egerton!"

The baronet paused here. He could not help it, for he was utterly out of breath. Had he not been, the startled captain would have heard more before he could have shoved a defensive word in edgeways.

"I perceive, Sir Humphrey," said he, in an apologetic tone, "that your secretary has reported language used by me in a hasty fit of the tantrums, which—"

"Yes, sir—yes, sir, he has told me that you dared, before all your crew and officers, to curse me, sir—me, the Governor of Bermuda!" cried the baronet, recovering his breath, while his anger lost no ground. "Curse you, sir, for a little while, and see how you like it! If you don't—you wear a sword, and so do I! Do you understand that, sir—do you understand that?"

"Please to be calm, and understand me, Sir Humphrey," said the captain, with unwonted patience. "I tell you that when I made the expression which gives you offence, I was annoyed by outside matters, and spoke without either thought or the intent to insult you personally or officially. Fearing that my words might be either misconstrued or exaggerated, I hastened hither, to explain and to apologize."

"You had no business to curse me!"

"I grant it," said Captain Morris.

"I am an old man, sir; old enough to be your father, sir!"

"True, my dear sir," mildly acknowledged the captain.

"But I can fight, sir—fight you, for all that; and curse me if I'll be cursed with impunity!"

"Sir, again I offer you my humble apologies."

"Which you must accept, my dear father," said Venona, coming most opportunely to the captain's aid.

"Tut, tut, girl; go away from here. Don't you see I'm mad—mad as I can be?"

"Not with me, father; not with me!"

And Venona put her round, soft arm over one of his shoulders, and with the other hand stroked his chin, as one would the mane of a restive horse, while she kissed his red face two or three times.

"Come now, that's a dear, good father—accept the captain's apologies for whatever offence he has committed—I am sure he means none. Be friendly with him, and settle your differences over a bottle of wine; do, that's a sweet, amiable papa! Cousin Tom, please tell the butler to send a couple of bottles of father's choice down to the bower by the sea-wall, with three glasses. Hurry, coz, for we'll have a nice little make-up party!"

The baronet tried in vain to remain wrathful. A smile stole out upon his wrathful countenance, like the gleam of a rainbow on the face of a departing storm-cloud; and resting his great fat hand on her white neck, he said:

"Well, blossom, it shall be as you say! If Captain Morris will take a glass of wine, and not curse me any more, I'll let the matter drop!"

"A thousand thanks, fair lady, for coming to my rescue!" said the captain, who could not but offer the lady his arm, as she pointed to the arbor by the sea-wall, and said: "Let us go, and wait for the wine!"

CHAPTER XXX.

It is about as impossible to keep the eye of a reader, perusing a story like this, upon all our characters at once, as it is for a school-ma'am to see what each one of fifty scholars is doing—and that she can't do, without she is cross-eyed and cross-grained; and 'tis a doubtful matter then.

But we can run away from our friends at Bermuda a little while, to see those whom we left at Salem; for I can scarcely believe that even Lizzie Egerton or sweet Venona can cause fair Kate Cringle to be utterly forgotten by our readers.

When Mr. Doolittle arrived safely in Salem

harbor with his prize—when a rousing salute was thundered out from the guns of a captured sloop-of-war, taken in fair fight—boarded and captured by their own gallant townsmen, the people of that ancient town almost went mad with pride and joy.

A few there were who had to mourn for the loss of loved ones; but the sun of victory brightened even the cloud of their sorrow. The news, spreading like light everywhere, gave gladness to the hearts of all the patriotic, and dashed cold water upon the hopes of the dastards who still sided with the king and his minions.

Of course, more than all others, did Mr. Cringle rejoice. Not alone that the capture added to his wealth and importance among his fellow-citizens, but because it gave strength to the cause of his country, weakened her enemies, encouraged her friends. And he was proud of his vessel, doubly proud of Seawaif, whom he began to look upon as a son; for, with a father's penetrating eye, he had detected the attachment of his daughter for the brave young captain; and he never, for an instant, could have been made to think that any one, loved by Kate, could fail to return her affection—for of all things upon earth, he deemed *her* the most lovable.

And to him she was. Like a precious angel-gift from heaven, she had been given to him in the spring-time of his wedded life—when grim Death came, and took away the loved partner of his heart, the child was left to cheer and comfort him; and she had so grown up and into his heart, that she seemed an integral and vital part of himself—a part which it would be death to lose.

"I want you to send Mr. Doolittle up to me, father!" said Kate, after her father had announced the arrival of the prize. "I want to hear from his own lips how Edward took his vessel into action—how he fought—how he won the victory. Oh! how I wish I was a man!"

"No, you don't, girl; no, you don't!" said Mr. Cringle, with a sly wink. "Men don't marry *men*, and you'd die if you thought you wasn't to have *him*!"

"But I'd like to be able to fight by his side!" continued Kate, with a blush.

"Oh! it'll be time enough for *you* to talk of fighting by his side after the country is free, and peace is declared. You'll fight then—tongue-battles, seasoned with kisses! There—there, don't talk back, darling! I'll send that shab-sided first mate up to talk to you. But you must call him *captain* now—he has grown nearly out of his boots with importance, since he has been in charge of the man-of-war!"

Kate smiled, and kissed her father, who, after tapping her cheek gently with his great brown hand, said: "Bless you, beauty—bless you!" and then went down into his store, where Mr. Doolittle was telling all about the capture, for probably the fiftieth time, to a listening and wondering audience.

"Daughter Kate wants to see you up-stairs. *Captain Doolittle!*" said the old merchant, as he entered the store.

"To see *me*, sir?" said the tickled officer, who, though he had often cast a wistful eye toward the beautiful heiress of the richest man in Salem, had never even had a chance to speak to her, and now hardly believed his ears when he heard that *she* wished to see him.

"Yes, she wants to see *you*!" said the merchant.

"I reckon I'd better go and git shaved and fixed up first!" said he, instantly—thinking that the better his personal appearance was, the more favorable would be his reception.

"You look well enough now, and hadn't better keep her waiting—she wants to ask you about the captain, I reckon!" said Mr. Cringle.

"Oh, is that *all*?" said Mr. Doolittle, whose look of premature joy and importance perceptibly altered with the last piece of information.

But, nevertheless, he went to the little corner of the store where a tin wash-basin, a looking-glass, crash-towel, and a comb of horn, fastened to a nail by a long string, invited an improvement in his toilet; and there he occupied several minutes in washing and in combing down his long, yellowish hair, which had "a way of its own," which the comb could with difficulty coax out of it.

Having, however, arranged it to his satisfaction, and given his shirt-collar an extra pull upward, Mr. Doolittle smiled pleasantly at himself in the glass, as if to say—"You'll do now, *sir*!"—and went up the back pair of stairs, to-

ward which Mr. Cringle had pointed him when he delivered his message.

CHAPTER XXXI.

When Mr. Doolittle left the looking-glass, he felt as bold as a *lion*—by the time he reached the head of the stairs, he began to feel a little more like a *lamb*; and when, after knocking at the sitting-room door, he heard the sweet voice of Kate say: "*Come in!*" he felt more lamb-like still; and when he *did* go in, and saw her in the blaze of her beauty and a French gingham dress, he felt as *sheepish* as could be. Twirling his hat in his hands, as if he didn't know what else to do with them, and blushing as if he had been caught doing something wrong, he stood and stammered:

"Your father said as how you wanted me for somethin', marm!"

"Yes, *Captain Doolittle!*" said Kate, not forgetting her father's instructions, in regard to his title. "Take a seat, sir, if you please!"

Dropping his hat, and then picking it up, and still blushing, the officer *siddled* up to the chair, which she had placed near her own, and lifting it up first, as if to see if it was strong enough to hold his weight, suddenly placed it under him, and sat down quickly, as if he was afraid some one would jerk it from under him.

Then he bent over, and put his hat under it, as if to preserve it from harm, by "hovering" it as a hen would a pet chicken.

Kate could hardly repress a smile as she noticed his blushes and nervous agitation; but she was a well-bred girl, and did not wish to make him more confused than he was, lest he should be utterly unable to answer her questions.

"How did you leave Captain Seawaif, sir?" she asked.

"Oh! he was all right, marm—as stiff as a billy-goat in a gale o' wind—that is, marm, he was well, I thank you!"

"Did he get hurt any in the battle?"

"Yes, marm—no marm—that is, I mean, I believe *he* didn't get hurt much, but I seen where a bordin' pike tore a hole in his trowsers!"

Kate could hardly help laughing, and Mr. Doolittle became more confused than ever, when he noticed the mischievous light of her really beautiful eyes.

"You must have fought very bravely to have captured so large a vessel, with even more men than you had yourselves!" said Kate.

"I swan to gracious, we *did*, marm! We slew 'em right and left, like Sampson did the Philistines. We give 'em Hail Columby from the start! They didn't know which end they stood on, some of 'em!"

"When they cried for mercy, you spared them, did you not?"

"Yes, after we got over bein' mad so we could hear 'em!"

"That was right. Mercy always goes in the tracks of valor!" said Kate. "I suppose, Captain Doolittle, that you will soon rejoin your vessel?"

"The Lord only knows where she is now, marm!" said the officer. "I s'pose I'll have to wait till *he* comes in, or I know where to go to meet him!"

"And time must hang heavy on your hands in this dull place, after being engaged in such active scenes as you have!"

"It wouldn't, marm, if you'd let me come to see *you*, and talk to *you*!" said Mr. Doolittle, with a desperate courage, which made him blush and tremble more than ever.

"I shall be very glad to see you often while you are in port!" said Kate, with a quiet smile. "Any friend of my father's is welcome here, especially if he is a brave man, and loves his country!"

"It's enough to make *any* man brave, to hear *you* talk!" said Mr. Doolittle, gathering courage, and actually hitching his chair a foot or more nearer to the lady.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Did I not see Miss Egerton in your company, a short time since, Miss Dorset?" asked Captain Morris, after he had gallantly drank her health in the reconciliation glass for which she had sent.

"Of course—Lizzie and my blossom always

hunt in couples," said Sir Humphrey. "How did you leave Sir Peter?"

"He was well. I have a letter for Miss Egerton from him," said the officer—not liking to have received his answer from the father instead of the daughter.

"Venona can take it to her—can't you blossom, while the captain and me empty the bottle?" said the baronet.

Inwardly cursing the old gentleman's officiousness, the captain said:

"There is no need of haste in its delivery. Merely a friendly letter, I presume—for he had no news to send."

"Nothing about the progress of the war?" asked Venona, who noticed, and was secretly delighted at the uneasiness of the captain.

"Nothing. The rebels will soon be starved out. They are a miserable, cowardly set—half naked and half armed!"

"Yet, for half-armed men, they did a great deal of damage at Bunker's Hill," said Venona, sarcastically, in reply to the contemptuous remark made by the captain.

The captain bit his lip, and was about to make a reply which, judging from his looks, would not have been very amiable, when two more persons entered upon the scene—the lady leaning, in the most friendly and confiding manner, upon the gentleman's arm.

The eyes of Captain Morris fairly flashed with anger and jealousy, for his suit to Miss Egerton had already been openly made, under the sanction of her uncle and guardian, Sir Peter Parker; and whether she favored it or not, he felt that he had a right to pay her sole attention.

"How do you do, Captain Morris?" said Lizzie, with cool courtesy. "Allow me to introduce to you my particular friend, Lieutenant Sinclair."

"I shall be glad to make Lieutenant Sinclair's most intimate acquaintance, very shortly!" said Captain Morris, with emphasis, and bowing haughtily: "but at *present*, I must ask a private interview with Miss Egerton. I have a letter from her uncle for her."

"Miss Egerton can receive all letters or communications from her uncle in the presence of her friends, and knows no necessity for granting a *private* interview with Captain Morris, for that or any other purpose!" said Lizzie, calmly, ironically, yet so gently in tone, that but for a slight deepening of her color and a brighter light in her eye, no one could have deemed her to be as she was—very angry.

The captain, however, had not such a command over his looks or temper, for his face flushed and his hands trembled as he produced the letter; and, handing it to Lizzie, said:

"After the perusal of Sir Peter's letter, Miss Egerton may alter her mind!"

Lizzie very quietly opened the letter, and, as she read it, a smile passed over her face, and she said:

"It appears that your ship has received some damage from the enemy!"

"Why, you said there was no *news*, Captain Morris!" said Venona, sarcastically.

"None worth reporting. A cowardly Yankee schooner pitched a couple of shot into our foremast, which disabled it, and then, when we were going to attack her with the boats of the squadron, she made sail, and ran away through some intricate passages among islands, where we could not follow her."

As the captain spoke, he kept his eyes fixed upon the face of Seawaif, hoping there to detect proof that his suspicions were correct. But there was not the least sign of agitation, or even a look of surprise upon that face.

"The Yankees could not have been very cowardly, to have attacked a fifty-gun ship in the presence of a large fleet, with a schooner; or anything else but prudent, in evading the attack of the boats of the whole squadron!" said Lizzie, with a smile.

"I am not used to argument with *ladies* in such matters. Myself and Mr. Sinclair, probably, could understand each other better—especially as he commands a schooner which is very Yankee in her build!" said Morris, spitefully.

"I am always ready to converse on nautical matters, or any other that concerns *gentlemen* only, at a proper time and in a proper place!" said Seawaif, very calmly, while he firmly looked Morris in the eye.

"My uncle informs me that a transport will be here, on her way to England, in about two months, by which, unless I accept a certain contingency, he desires that I will return to his estate in England, near Yarmouth," said Lizzie, with her eyes upon the letter.

"And perhaps the necessity to discuss the contingency to which your uncle alludes will cause you to grant the private interview which you just declined," said Captain Morris, in a tone almost as sarcastic as hers had been.

"There being no necessity to discuss the contingency, which I unhesitatingly and forever decline, there will be no cause for me to grant any interview, unless in the presence of my friends!" said Lizzie, haughtily. "And," she added, "if Captain Morris desires it, I will name the contingency which my rather too imperative uncle has spoken of!"

Morris blushed scarlet, but remained silent.

"My uncle, presuming upon rather too extensive powers, granted to him in my father's will, wishes to control my heart and hand, as well as my fortune; but he will find that I am not a child, to be kept in leading-strings. I am old enough to act, and feel, and judge for myself—and Captain Morris can tell him so, if he chooses! Excuse us, Sir Humphrey, Mr. Sinclair and myself will meet you at dinner."

And the beautiful girl, twice as handsome in her excitement as before, passed on, with her proud and happy escort, who, in her presence, and in the thought that she loved him, forgot all danger, and even if he remembered it, did not care therefor.

"Huzza! There's spirit for you! There's Egerton blood!" cried Sir Humphrey, who hated Morris enough to enjoy this scene exquisitely.

Morris was too angry to speak; and drank his wine, more to conceal his confusion than from any other reason.

"Will you not take a walk with me, Captain Morris?" said Venona, in a very gentle and persuasive way; for she feared that a storm might break which would really endanger Seawaif and Morley, and she determined to do all she could to keep back its fury, for the present, at least.

"Yes—take a walk; but don't forget dinner. 'Twill be ready in an hour," said Sir Humphrey.

Thus pressed, common gallantry prevented Morris from refusing; and, with a very cold grace, he offered his arm to the baronet's daughter, and would have followed the path which Lizzie had taken, but Venona insisted upon showing him some rare flowers, of her own planting, in another direction; and, in spite of his wishes, he was led off in a different course from that which he wished to pursue.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"He more than suspects the character of your vessel," said Lizzie, to Seawaif, the moment they were out of the hearing of Morris. "I could see it by the way that he watched your countenance when he spoke of his vessel having been fired into! He tried to read there an acknowledgment!"

"He failed in marking any change in my looks. I have my features too much under control, and my feelings also, to let a man, who is himself half blind with anger and jealousy, read a thought of mine," said Seawaif.

"Do you think that he was jealous?" asked Lizzie.

"Certainly—no one ever showed it more plainly. From his looks, rather than any expression of yours, I knew what the contingency was to which he alluded!"

"Ah! pray tell me what you think it was!"

"If I surmise correctly, will you acknowledge it?"

"Certainly—I shall tell you if you even do not, for no one has so good a right to know as him to whom I have given my heart, and sacredly promised my hand!"

"Ah, dear, dear Lizzie, that promise and your love make me but too happy!"

"But the contingency—what do you suppose it to have been?"

"Why, your uncle wishes you to marry this same Captain Morris, and in case you do not do so, desires that you will retire to some lonely place which he calls his estate, in England!"

"Why, you are a magician, my dear Edward! Had you perused the letter yourself, you could not have come nearer to the truth!"

"Where is this estate of your uncle's?"

"It is on the eastern coast of England, near the classic port of Yarmouth, famed for her-rings, and nothing else. It is a dreary old castle, overlooking the wild and barren coast, just fit to imprison disobedient wards in!"

"And extremely handy for a bold lover to

visit, whose highway is on the sea," said Seawaif, with a laugh.

"It would be a dangerous latitude for you to visit during the continuance of this war," said Lizzie.

"Love laughs at danger!" was his reply.

"But weeps when the danger becomes fatal and its object is doomed to perish," said Lizzie, sadly. "I had rather be there in that old castle where I spent my early life, than here," she added, "for there I can think of you and our future, without being persecuted by the attentions of others. It is a quiet and a lonely place, and dear Venona has promised to go with me when I return!"

"Will her father spare her?"

"He must—he is kind, and she is willful. If her entreaties should fail with him, a few tears will gain his consent!"

"Would that you were already mine, and need not go beyond my protection," said the young officer, tenderly.

"It is better that we should wait. I do not wish to go to you a dowerless bride, though I know how entirely disinterested is your love. But wealth adds to comfort, despite the romance of 'love in a cottage,' and I do not care that property which is legally mine should go to another! I feel sure that this war will soon be over; and when it is, you shall claim me in a way which will make the refusal of my guardian's consent an impossibility. I am not in any way prudish—I love you and acknowledge it, and hope for the speedy coming of the day when we shall be united, no more to separate during life. At present, while peril is all around you, from which I would by no means dissuade you, for it is honorable and glorious, I would be an incumbrance. Therefore, let me care for myself until you and your country are free; and then gladly will I resign my freedom into your hands, and become the wife of an American citizen—a prouder title, in my mind, than that of King of England!"

"My beautiful, my own!" he murmured, and he pressed her to his manly breast with a pride equal to her own, and an affection as boundless as the sea over which his vessel often rode.

But the next instant he released her, for the voice of Venona, speaking quite loudly, doubtless as a warning, was heard in a neighboring avenue; and very soon she was seen with the British captain in tow, chatting away with him as if the whole hope of her life was centred in a wish to make his time agreeable.

Not wishing to meet him, Seawaif suggested to Lizzie that they should join the baronet at the house, to which she assented; and they were soon in the company of the old gentleman, who was in excellent humor, for the dinner hour was near at hand.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

In a short time after Lizzie and Seawaif reached the house, Venona and the captain appeared; and immediately after, the ladies excusing themselves to dress for dinner, left the two officers with the baronet.

"Come gentlemen, come to the side-board and qualify our poor water with some good brandy, and try and rouse an appetite for dinner," said the latter.

"I have no objection to do so, and I shall be glad to drink to a better acquaintance with Captain Morris," said Seawaif.

"Doubtless we shall very soon be better acquainted," said Morris, pointedly. "It is unfortunate that we have not met before!"

"Perhaps it is, sir," said Seawaif, blandly; "but now that we have met, it is to be hoped that we shall become well acquainted!"

"It shall not be my fault, if we do not, sir! And to give a better opportunity to prove my wishes sincere on that point, I shall solicit the honor of your company on board of the 'Bristol,' after we have had the honor of dining with Sir Humphrey!"

"It will afford me sincere pleasure to attend Captain Morris anywhere, and at any time!" replied Seawaif, with the same cold and studied politeness used by the British officer.

"How do you take your brandy, with or without?" asked the baronet, pointing to the water-pitcher, while he filled his glass "with," but abstained from the qualifying "without."

"My throat not being coppered yet for fifth proof spirit, I believe I'll qualify," said Seawaif, carelessly, as he weakened his liquor.

"English seamen seldom water their grog," said Morris, tossing off his portion undiluted.

"If they had only East India arrack to drink, they probably would not be averse to water," said Seawaif.

"Or if they were used to New England rum," said Morris, looking Seawaif in the eye.

"An article which I should suppose you would be well supplied with, since you have been cruising on the New England coast," said Seawaif, returning his glance.

"The cowardly Yankees take good care to keep hidden away in their inland creeks and coves, and give us no chance for a fair crack at them, outside," said Morris.

"I should suppose, then, that brave and zealous officers would follow them into their harbors. I presume, as the country is yet in its infancy, there are no very formidable fortifications erected!"

"No—only some miserable mud and log forts, which my ship could knock to pieces in an hour," said the captain, contemptuously.

"It is really singular how such cowardly creatures, thus illy provided for defence, can have the mad effrontery to resist his majesty's officers for a moment, is it not?" said Seawaif, determined to out-do Morris on his own tack.

"It is," said Morris. "I hope to append a few of them as ornaments to the yard-arms of my ship, before long!"

"Exactly! That would be beautiful; and it would strike almost as much terror into them as must the Government's offer to the Indians, of money for scalps; though I notice that some of our own leading people have had the folly to declare that very commendable offer barbarous, and unworthy of the age we live in!"

"You do not think so?"

"I? Oh no—I approve of burning rebels, always, provided—as the cook-book directs, in regard to cooking a goose—A. catch the bird!"

"Some geese are caught before they know it, and that will probably be the case with some of the poor Yankees that we've been talking about. They are so bold and audacious in their ignorance and self-sufficient cunning, that they run their necks into a noose before they know it!"

"Dinner, gentlemen, dinner is ready—hark to the joyful sound—mine ears attend the cry," said the baronet, fortunately at this juncture, for the faces of both gentlemen seemed to be indicative of a rising storm.

A moment later, the ladies made their appearance, and in spite of an attempt made by Morris to secure the arm of Miss Egerton; by a skillful and evidently preconcerted movement of both the ladies, the British captain found himself to leeward, and forced to take that of Venona, while Lizzie, with an arch look of triumph, was escorted to the table by Edward Seawaif.

"Do not touch the sherry wine—though you see the baronet and Morris take it; it is the favorite of the latter!" whispered Lizzie to Seawaif, with a slight pressure of the arm, which he understood, and replied to without speaking, in the same manner.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A Bermuda dinner, even at that early day, was peculiar—it had a "fishy" smell and savor, even as it has in modern days. The baronet could not there command the mighty sirloin which would have graced his table in Hampshire, nor could the saddle of South Down mutton be procured, but the Westphalia ham was ready to follow the soup of turtle, and the courses of an infinite variety of fish. And an apology for roast beef was there, which the baronet declared was as good as could be had for love or money in such a climate, and not good enough for a hungry Scotchman at that.

But Captain Morris either had a sea-appetite on, or felt like some cross children that you may have seen, that he must bite something—for he ate almost voraciously, and kept his jaws so much occupied that he could not find time to use his tongue. All of the gentlemen, and the ladies, also, partook temperately of champagne during the meats, and when the dessert was introduced, each of the ladies took a single glass of port, in which they were joined by Seawaif, but the baronet was loud in his praises of the sherry, which he preferred, and which Morris also drank, perhaps because Seawaif said that he did not like it.

As a general thing, it had been the custom of the ladies to rise instantly after the dessert had been partaken of; but upon this occasion

they lingered for some time, endeavoring, by their pleasant and lively conversation, to keep the old baronet and his guests amused.

But in a very short time, Sir Humphrey and Captain Morris began to show evident signs of being very easily affected with their wine, not in a lively way, but by becoming quite confused and stupefied in their answers to questions. The captain feeling very sleepy all at once, declared, with a yawn, that he must go aboard his ship, and tried to rise from his chair, but his limbs refused to do their duty, and he sunk back, with closed eyes, in his seat.

"Why—b—bless me, if—if Mor— Morris hasn't got dr— drunk for once!" said the baronet, with a yawn. "Pass—pass the bottle blossom!"

Before, however, he could raise another glass to his lips, he also was asleep.

The eyes of both the young ladies now gleamed with delight—their plan had perfectly succeeded—their lovers were safe, at least for a time, from the eye of Captain Morris, and it was left to them to make good use of the time for escape.

"How long will this stupor last?" asked Seawaif.

"Probably for several hours—but lose not a moment in Heaven's name. When he awakes, Morris will be so indignant that he will not temporize an instant!" said Lizzie, who having ordered the servants out of the room, now felt no hesitation in speaking her thoughts aloud.

"I must write a farewell message to my friend Morris, and then I will go on board—I cannot attempt to move my vessel until after dark, and there is yet nearly an hour of time to be passed away!" said Seawaif.

Taking a pencil from his pocket, and a leaf of paper from a note-book, he wrote these words:

"Captain Edward Seawaif, of the American Privateer *Tyrannicide*—who, a few weeks since, sank a British sloop-of-war, and captured her convoy of five valuable ships, which he took safely into port—who also, a few days afterward, beat back a boat-expedition, sent to take him by Sir Peter Parker, then disabled the ship *Bristol*, so that her zealous captain, Morris, could have an excuse to visit Bermuda and persecute an orphan girl with unwelcome attentions—and who soon after the above adventures, engaged, boarded, and captured the British sloop-of-war *Electra*, and sent her a prize, into port—presents his respects to Captain Morris, and regrets that the captain should be so fond of wine as to neglect his duty! When Captain M. intends to grace his yard-arm with rebels, he should first catch them!"

"Adieu, dear captain—hasten to bire-water, where it will not be difficult to find your very obedient servant."
EDWARD SEAWAIF.

Then, after a moment, he added the following:

"P. S.—Captain Seawaif desires Captain Morris particularly to understand, that Sir Humphrey Dorset has not for a moment even suspected that the schooner was American; and that if Captain Morris should by any report, or any ill-timed and useless anger, in any way injure the said honorable, loyal and generous gentleman, or any of his family, on account of the matter now between Captains Seawaif and Morris, the former will assuredly cut off the ears of the latter at the first opportunity, and nail them to his mast-head, and until an opportunity to do that occurs, proclaim him a dastard and a villain."
E. S."

"Have either of you ladies a pair of scissors to spare for a moment?" asked Seawaif, after he had pinned the foregoing paper to the breast of the captain's uniform.

Lizzie produced a pair, asking what he intended to do.

"Merely to exchange tokens with the captain!" said Seawaif, laughing, and cutting a tress of his own dark glossy hair from his head, and fastening it to the paper.

"An exchange is no robbery!" he added, and a moment after, he cut one of the captain's superb whiskers from his cheek, and also one moustache from his lip, and rolling them up, put them in his pocket.

"Heavens! the captain will be heart-broken!" said Venona, with an arch smile. "He thought there were no such whiskers as his own in the world!"

"They were too beautiful to be monopolized by one individual—I have only secured a specimen for general exhibition!" said Seawaif, with a laugh.

"Do not delay, every moment is precious now!" said Lizzie, who was too anxious for his safety to enjoy even a practical joke.

"I will leave at once, and Miss Dorset, I will bear your parting regrets to Mr. Morley, whom I know to be most tenderly attached to you, and who is a worthy and honorable gentleman. We shall find means not only to communicate with you, but, in time, to see you. Have no fears for our safety—fortune has favored us too

far to desert us now! Farewell, but not forever—farewell but for a time!" said Seawaif.

One embrace and salute from Lizzie, a salute as chaste as a brother would have given to a sister, exchanged with Venona, and he was gone.

Lizzie gazed after him with tearful eyes, but Venona could not help laughing, while she regarded the sleeping captain—who, with his one-sided whisker and moustache, presented, indeed, a most ludicrous appearance.

"How he will swear when he looks in a mirror!" cried the laughing girl. "Or if he has any feeling left, he will not have to wait for that to discover his loss. He may thank his stars that his loss is not irreparable, for hair will grow again in time!"

"We must prevent the servants from discovering anything until our friends are safe!" said Lizzie, now turning to Venona, for Seawaif had disappeared in the gathering gloom of approaching night, and was now in his boat, and on his way to his vessel.

"It will be easily done—a word to the servants, and they will not disturb my father and his guest over their wine!" said Venona, archly. "How I would like to have the captain's picture in his present situation!" she added.

"I wish that my uncle could see it, or rather see him now! He then might not feel quite so much attached to him as he does!" said Lizzie. "He shall not lack a description of him at any rate. Why he should wish to control my hand and heart with his tyrant will is more than I can fathom. Were I his own daughter he could not be more absolute! But I have a will of my own, thank Heaven! and will use it!"

"My dear, good papa would find that I had too, if he should try to thwart me!" said Venona. "The day that unites you to your Edward, shall not see me far from the side of my Eugene, if he lives!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

As soon as Seawaif got on board of his vessel, he called Doctor La Motte to his assistance, and in a very short time prepared a few dozens of wine, and some other liquor for use, intending to prove his friendship and generosity in an impromptu visit to the "*Bristol*," and in becoming self-introduced to her officers. Giving the wine and liquor in charge of the old gunner, Mr. Brownell, to whom he gave special instructions to be as generous with the English crew as he was with the officers, he ordered him to follow in another boat, while he went on in his gig.

The night had now fairly set in; and though there was a breeze blowing off the land lightly, the dull black clouds that sometimes precede a rain-storm lay heavy and leaden in the sky, and hid the stars from sight. But the position of the vessels could easily be distinguished by the lights which they hoisted; and soon after pushing from his own vessel, the boat of Seawaif was hailed from the "*Bristol*."

"*Tartar*," was his reply; and in a moment more he was alongside of the English man-of-war, and proceeding over her side. Assuming the liveliness of a man who "felt his wine," though not decidedly intoxicated, Seawaif introduced himself to the first lieutenant of the ship and the other officers, who met him in the gangway.

"I dined with Captain Morris at the governor's, on shore, gentlemen," said he, "and had a glorious good time. He is a trump, out and out, and takes to his wine like a baby to milk. I saw that he was disposed to be a little attentive to a fair lady there; and as the old baronet was half-seas over, I thought I would come off and enjoy an hour or two with your mess; and supposing, as you had been on a long cruise, you might be scant of wine, I took the liberty to order my steward to send aboard a few dozen for your use."

Instantaneously voted to be a "good fellow" by all the officers who heard the welcome news, Seawaif was invited into the ward-room, whither, as the wine soon followed, all the officers of the ship rapidly gathered, and a general jollification was the order of the night. If the suspicions of the officers, like those of their captain, had been aroused in regard to the character of the "*Tartar*," the fact that their lynx-eyed captain had dined with her commander, and been satisfied, as they supposed, set all of them at rest. And the generous, free-and-easy manner of Seawaif made

him instantly popular with them all, and they would never have believed, for an instant, that a Yankee rebel could be such a gentleman as he seemed.

For then, as is still the case with too many of their countrymen, the English believed Americans to be naturally very much the same as savages—heathen fresh from the wilds. Even within a few years, I recollect to have read of quite an intelligent and celebrated English lady being surprised, upon being introduced to a native-born American gentleman, to find that he was white!

The revel on board the "*Bristol*" ran high and glorious for a while. Toasts were drank; songs, the most of them ridiculing the rebels, were sung—and the loudest voice of all was that of the commander of the "*Tartar*." His ear, too, could distinguish convivial noises on deck, and he knew that Brownell was doing his part. Although he pretended to drink as freely, or even more so, than any of the rest, a keen eye would have detected the commander of the schooner in playing "*young sojer*" by emptying his glass at his feet, instead of down his throat.

An hour passed; and Seawaif, at the end of that time, seemed to be very drunk, while the few of the British officers that were yet awake, were really so.

"I must—hic—go—board—hic—the *Tartar*! Hock—hic—and soda—hic—in morning—hic—for headache—hic!" he stammered, as he left the ward-room, and staggered to the deck.

Here he found Brownell and both of his boat's crews, sober, and ready for anything; but not an Englishman on watch. They had been but too ready to drink when liquor was offered them, and the consequence was rapid. Doctor La Motte's sleeping-powders had rendered excellent service.

Going to the flag-locker, Seawaif found the ship's ensign, which he bent on to the halliards and hoisted union down, so that it could be seen at daylight as a signal of distress.

He then hurried on board of the schooner with his boats.

"Is all ready to slip, sir?" he asked of Mr. Morley.

"All ready, sir!" said the young officer, pointing to a lantern fixed to a spar-buoy ready to be fastened to the end of the cable which they were about to slip; and which, when their regular light on board was put out, would be seen at the same height, and in about the same place.

"Then man the boats, and let the men, with muffled oars, take the tow-line, and follow me out, while I sound the way through the channel. Hoist the decoy-light, and slip as soon as the boats straighten the tow-line!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" said the young officer, in the same low tone in which he had received the order.

And then, in perfect silence, the crew of every boat stole over the side to their places; muffled oars were dropped into their rowlocks without noise; the towline was taken up; the cable slipped, with the spar-buoy and lantern left attached to it; and following the captain, who, once in a while, showed only a glimpse of light from a dark lantern, the schooner was towed quietly away from her anchorage, in the gloom. The channel was a narrow and a difficult one, and it required the utmost care, both by compass courses and soundings, to avoid the reefs; and hours passed before the deep soundings and the freshening breeze told them that they were all clear.

Then the boats went alongside—the crews sprang on board, and hoisted them up, and sail was made upon the schooner.

By the time that this was done, the day, which had been unwrapping itself from the embrace of night, came up in its car of purple and gold; and in his pride and triumph, Seawaif ordered a national salute fired.

And as the echoes of the guns rolled away over the waters, and rattled against the land, the saucy schooner, with her country's flag proudly floating from her gaff, and her other colors streaming from her mast-heads, stood away, with the white canvas belling out from every spar—looking, indeed, like a thing of life and beauty.

"They've slept well," said Seawaif to Morley, as he pointed to the English vessel, where the cross of St. George was fluttering as they had left it.

"But I reckon they'll soon wake now, for there goes Morris in his boat," said Morley,

who, with a spy-glass to his eye, was scanning the harbor.

"I see two white flags waving to us from the house," said Seawaif, who had turned his telescope in that direction.

"Heaven bless the noble girls!" sighed the young man.

"Amen to that!" Mr. Brownell, two more guns, for a private salute!" said Seawaif.

"Don't forget the baronet," said Morley.

"I will not: three guns, Mr. Brownell!"

"They understand us," said Morley, who was looking now at the house—or, rather, those in it—also. "Their handkerchiefs still wave."

"But the English colors have come down, on the 'Bristol,'" said Seawaif. "By thunder, there comes a shot!"

"Too short, by a mile or more," said Morley, with a laugh. "John Bull may as well save his powder."

"I wondare, now, who ze baronet will 'ave for to get intoxicate wiz?" sighed La Motte, who had been very silently regarding all the movements.

The breeze, now freshening as they receded from land, increased the speed of the gallant craft; and soon they were losing sight of the spot where they had passed many eventful and pleasant hours—to which we will now return, retrograding both over space and time, for a little while.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

It need not, would not, be supposed by any reader cognizant of the anxieties natural to the hearts of those who love, that either Lizzie or Venona felt any desire to sleep, while the night passed on, after Seawaif had left the house. Although they could not, in consequence of the darkness, see what was going on, they knew that he, and those under his command, were engaged in a bold and desperate attempt to extricate their vessel from her perilous position; and they prayed heartily for their success, although they knew that its chances were not brilliant.

Love has keen eyes. While wrapped in their thick shawls they sat upon the piazza and watched, they saw, far out on the water, the occasional gleam of light which Seawaif showed as he piloted the schooner through the winding channel, and in whispers they expressed their belief that the light came from the escaping vessel.

Several hours had elapsed, and in the dining-room the silence which reigned told how well the baronet and Captain Morris slept. But some time after midnight the girls heard a noise in that direction. First a low muttering, then louder words, then a crash as of broken glass or dishes, and finally an angry shout for lights and servants.

"It will not do for us to be seen now, let us hasten to our chamber, and appear to come from it in alarm, if there is sufficient noise made," said Lizzie.

And the girls hurried away to their room.

The cries of the baronet, and the curses of the captain, soon brought a negro servant with a light.

"Why, bless my soul, captain, if I don't believe we've been drunk—you're a better fellow than I thought you was," cried the baronet. Then as his eyes caught a sight of the captain's face, he burst out into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, in which the negro servant joined.

They could not well help it, for the sight of a British captain in full uniform, with one whisker and one moustache only, both very prominent, while the other side of his *angere-paled* face was smooth, was a sufficient excuse to make a preacher laugh.

"What the deuce are you laughing at?" asked Morris, raising his hand to discover what it was that made his face feel so singularly.

They laughed yet the louder at his actions when he discovered his loss. He swore terribly, worse than the whole "army in Flanders" ever did.

"That Sinclair must have done it—the cruel wag—ha, ha! He didn't like your attentions to Lizzie—ha, ha! You don't know how odd you look, captain—I can't help laughing, on my soul I can't! Ha—ha—ha!"

"It shall be no laughing matter to him, or you either, sir!" shouted Morris. "You have been harboring a cursed Yankee, sir! Yes, sir, giving aid and relief to a *rebel*, sir, and you *know* it, sir!"

"Captain Morris, I don't often get mad, or

insult a man in my own house, but you lie—you lie, sir; and if you say that again I'll kick you!" cried Sir Humphrey.

"The schooner that is called the 'Tartar' is the same that fired into the Bristol, and the officer who calls himself Sinclair is a Yankee and a rebel!" cried Morris, not heeding the threat of the baronet.

"You're too drunk to know what you're saying! Go and get the other side of your face shaved and get sober, and then you may talk reason!" said the angry baronet.

"I have been *drugged* at your table, Sir Humphrey!" shouted Morris. "Drugged, insulted, and abused; and, sir, if it cost my life, I'll have satisfaction!"

"You shall have it, *very* quick!" cried the baronet, now thoroughly enraged. "Here, kick that liveried rascal out of doors!" he cried to the servants, who, alarmed by the noise, had hurried to the room.

"Why, what is the matter, dear papa?" cried Venona, who, with Lizzie, had just entered the room.

"Are you *ill*, Captain Morris?" asked Lizzie, with well-assumed alarm at the same time.

The captain did not pause to see or hear more: but, uttering wild and bitter curses and terrible threats, he rushed from the room and house. Upon reaching the landing-place, he hailed loud and long before he could get a boat from his ship, and the day was actually breaking before one reached the shore.

When it did, and he saw the schooner under sail beyond the mouth of the harbor, with a breeze which had already placed her beyond the reach of his battery, his rage almost made him speechless. The sight of his own flag, union down, did not lessen his anger. As he rowed past the spar-buoy with the lantern at its peak, he understood by what ruse the schooner had managed to slip away in the darkness unseen; but not until he had got on board, did he completely understand how Yankee cunning had worked as efficiently with his officers and crew on board, as he supposed it had with himself on shore; for he did not suspect that his wine on shore had been drugged by or through the influence of any other than Seawaif, since the latter had undoubtedly done it on board of his vessel.

Nor could he blame his officers, or punish his crew for getting into the same trap which had caught himself; and after ordering a single shot of defiance to be fired after the schooner, he went into his cabin to equalize the appearance of his face, by the sacrifice of the remaining whisker and moustache.

Thus done, he sent his executive officer on shore to arrange for the immediate repair of his vessel; for he swore that he would not rest until he had found the schooner again, and revenge himself upon Seawaif for his injury and insult, which he thoroughly understood, after having read in a cooler moment the paper which he had torn from his breast and thrust into his pocket in the first moments of his passion.

He determined not again to visit the baronet; for he felt that he had looked and appeared too ridiculous in the eyes of the ladies to be seen by them again without drawing smiles to their faces—and his pride would not allow them that triumph.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Mr. Doolittle had taken regular Yankee advantage of his invitation to call frequently on Miss Kate Cringle, and had gotten quite over the bashfulness which, at first, had made him appear so awkward and ridiculous. In truth, he appeared more ridiculous still, with his assumption of ease; for he mistook—as I have seen others do in more modern days—the kindness of Kate for an acknowledgment of his own captivating power, and seemed to believe that he had only to say the word to become the obliging custodian of her hand and fortune; for, of course, he thought that her heart had long since surrendered to his charms of person and mind.

It was some weeks after his first appearance in the parlor, that the scene occurred which we choose to describe, in order to elucidate his progress in that "art, which art is none."

Not now, as at first, did he shrinkingly occupy one chair, with his cap placed beneath it; but, seated on one chair, with his huge feet upon another, and his cap hanging on the back of a third, while his right arm rested on a fourth, and his left thumb was inserted in the

arm-hole of his waistcoat, he lay back with an air of importance, that Kate, for the life of her, could scarcely keep from laughing outright.

With his cat-gray eyes cast anxiously in vision toward the ceiling, and the fingers of his left hand beating a tattoo over that portion of the body generally supposed to contain the heart, Mr. Doolittle seemed to be in a very deep study.

Miss Kate, whose fingers were seldom idle, was engaged in knitting an article, which, in that region, was more useful and fashionable in winter time than kid gloves—a woolen mitten. Kate could, as I said before, scarcely keep a sober countenance, as she looked upon the occupant of four chairs, and his position; and she dared not trust herself to speak, lest she should open the flood-gates of mirth.

"Two and seving is nine—and two more makes eleving!" he muttered, as, with eyes upturned, he seemed to be lost in some deep and important numerical study. "Five times eleving is fifty-five, and none to carry! By jingo! it's enough, when what'll come with her is added, and I'll do it—yes, I'll do it!" and as he emphasized the last words, he kicked over the chair on which his feet rested, and brought his great right hand down upon his slender leg with a force which threatened its instant destruction.

Kate raised her expressive eyes, and though she spoke not, they asked wonderingly *what* he meant to do. He did not keep her long in suspense.

"I tell you what, Miss Kate," said he, "when a feller has got nigh on to fifty-five thousand dollars in hand, or a commin' to him, he's worth somethin', *isn't* he?"

"Yes, so far as his money goes," she answered, quietly.

"Well, my shares in the prizes, so far, all reckoned up, comes to, or nigh to, forty-five thousand dollars; and supposin' that what the cap'n will be sure to bring in afore long, will count me ten thousand more, why that's fifty-five thousand, *isn't* it?"

"A round figures, yes," said Kate, quietly.

"Shouldn't you think a man could afford to get married on that?" continued Mr. Doolittle.

"There wouldn't be no danger of his havin' to stint his wife in calico, nor the *children* in vitels!"

Kate could not repress a smile, scarcely could she restrain her laughter. Mr. Doolittle regarded this as a favorable sign; and with one hand on his stomach, and the other used in rubbing his smooth-shaven chin, he said:

"I feel as if I ought to get married! What d'ye think o' that, Miss Kate?"

"I think, that it being a matter which concerns *you* most, it is only you who can judge of its expediency!"

"Yes! That's so!" and Mr. Doolittle sank away into a brown study again for a few moments.

All at once he started again, as if a bee had stung him, and said:

"S'pose we hitch teams, Miss Kate! You're as handsome as all out-o'-doors, and I aint bad-lookin', if I do say so myself! I've got enough to go to house-keepin' on, and it's likely your old man 'll give you somethin' nice to set up with! What d'ye say? Is't a bargain, and no backin' out?"

Kate, although she had expected something, had not quite expected this; and the droll way in which Mr. Doolittle made his proposition, was too much for her. She burst into a violent fit of laughter—laughed so long and loud, that Mr. Doolittle began to laugh too—a kind of a weak and hysterical laugh, which did not seem to have a very good foundation. At last, when she had laughed until the tears ran down her rosy cheeks, she began to try to look serious again, and Mr. Doolittle began also to draw his face into shape to receive her reply.

It soon came.

"Mr. Doolittle," said she, "I have been long thinking of making you a present!"

"Yes? Hev you, really?" he said, delighted; for he did not feel a doubt but that herself and prospective fortune was the present intended.

"Yes, sir," she continued, "and this seems an appropriate occasion for my intended present, that I beg you to accept it!" and rising, she handed him the article she had the moment before completed; and then, with a mischievous smile, walked out of the room.

"Shoe-thread and bee's-wax!" said Mr. Doolittle, looking as if he had dropped all his prize-money overboard. "Dang my buttons,

if she hasn't gi'n me the *mitten*! I'm a darned fool, anyhow it *can* be fixed!"

And he held up the sign of refusal, and regarded it with a look of sorrow which no pencil but that of *Darley* could properly delineate. "I think she might as well have given me a *pair* of 'em—one is no use for anything except to aggravate a feller!" After regarding it a short time in silence, he put it in his pocket, and then a heavy sigh came up from his bosom.

"I thought she was sweet on me!" he sighed. "She always smiled when I came—and shook hands when I went away! Women is deceivin' creeters! They ain't to be trusted no more'n a fog off the banks—you can't see through 'em! Now, who'd have thought she'd have given me the *mitten*?"

During this soliloquy, Mr. Doolittle had approached the window by which he could overlook the entrance to the harbor.

"Two vessels under full sail, with colors flying, were coming in."

"Thunder and lightning, there comes the schooner and another prize!" he shouted; and setting his cap upon his head, he rushed from the room, probably forgetting all about the *mitten*, in the excitement of the moment.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Kate entered the room a moment after the *mitten* had left it, and advancing to the window, saw the vessels. As she did so, a thousand conflicting hopes and fears came over her, and she sank pale and trembling into a chair near the window, where she could still keep her eyes on the advancing vessels. Was he, upon whom she had, unasked, placed the affections of her true, pure young heart, living or dead? had he passed safely through the perils which she knew had environed him upon every side, or had he fallen? stood he then triumphant beneath his country's flag, or did his loved form rest in the blue winding-sheet of a seaman's grave?

She could see, by the tattered sails, some spars missing, and their general appearance, that both vessels had been in a heavy and severe engagement—that the American was the victor she could also see, by the flag which waved above old England's cross upon the prize; but she knew not who might have fallen in the fight. She only knew that leaders, ever conspicuous, are but too often picked off by the marksmen of the enemy, and fall as Nelson fell, and Wolfe perished, in the very arms of victory.

Her father entered the room at this moment, and before he noticed her pallid face or agitated manner, asked:

"What was the matter with Doolittle, just now, daughter? He went through the store as if he was stark, raving mad!"

"He probably saw the schooner coming in, sir, as I do now, and wanted to get the news," said Kate, innocently.

"The schooner coming in? Why bless my soul, if she isn't!" cried the merchant, looking from his window. "And a prize with her—I must hurry down to the wharf. I wonder how old Gelson will feel *now*! He'll see more powder wasted, I reckon!"

And even as the old merchant spoke, the thunders of a salute rolled through the town, and woke up the inhabitants to the knowledge of the arrival.

He hurried away, and Kate was again alone. Going to the mantelpiece, she took down a spy-glass, and adjusting it to suit her eye, began to try to distinguish the persons on the yet distant vessels' decks.

While she was doing this, she heard the sound of a foot-step behind her; but supposing it to be a servant, paid no attention to it, until a low and meek voice—but yet the voice of a man—uttered her name.

She turned quickly, and saw that it was Moses Gelson who had entered her presence. Knowing her father's great aversion for him, she wondered why he came there; but, nevertheless, she spoke to him kindly, and asked him to sit down.

"No—no, Miss Kate," said the old man, in a tremulous tone. "Your father hates me, and I may not sit under his roof. He hates me without cause, for I never wronged him out of a penny—not a penny! But I didn't come here to tell you that—I saw him go out, and knew that all the town would run with him to see the ships that are coming in, and I thought I'd take the chance to come in and thank you

for saving me from abuse and cruelty a while ago! I'll never forget it—Miss Kate—I'll never forget it. Folks think I'm a mean old miser; but if they think Moses Gelson has no heart, they're mistaken—they're mistaken! He can feel a wrong, and a kindness, too, though kind words are seldom used by him. I'll not forget you, Miss Kate, I'll not forget you!"

"I only did my duty, sir—while my mother lived, she taught me to respect the aged!"

"Your mother was an angel, Miss Kate—I know her well, better—perhaps, than you are aware of—she was an angel in life; is an angel now," said the old man, in a husky voice, and a tear actually came out upon his white, dry cheek, and seemed to soak in there, for it stood a moment and then disappeared. "I've got a present for you, Miss Kate," he said, "I've kept it a long time, but I thought you'd value it a great deal; and though it's been a world of company to me, I thought it would please you. You look like it now, for you are a picture of what your mother was at your age!"

And as the old man spoke, he handed to Kate the miniature of a young and very beautiful woman, which, indeed, bore a strong resemblance to herself. It was in a gold locket, and surrounded by diamonds; but Kate's eyes did not rest upon the splendid setting—she was gazing tearfully, eagerly, upon the features of her mother.

"Do not show it to your father—or if he ever should see it by accident, do not tell him where you got it!" said the old man.

"I did not know before that you had ever been acquainted with my mother," said Kate; and she looked wonderingly at the old man, through the mist of her tears.

"Oh, yes; I knew her well—but—but I won't talk of it *now*—I may sometime, but not now! Good-bye—God bless you!—good-bye—I'll not forget you!"

And the old miser hurried away, while more tears were coming out upon his white cheeks, and dripping down upon his beard.

Kate stood for a moment and gazed upon the—to her—most precious relic; and after kissing it again and again, placed it in her bosom.

CHAPTER XL.

As usual, a large number of citizens gathered at the landing-place, when the salute announced the arrival of the vessels; and their shouts were long and loud when they saw their favorite schooner—for the "*Tyrannicide*" was not the only privateer out of that port—come to an anchor, and her prize, evidently a very large and heavily-armed transport come to, also, close under her lee.

After the usual duty of furling sails had been performed, a boat, lowered from the schooner, was seen coming to the shore, and in the stern-sheets a single officer, who was recognized by Mr. Cringle, in a little while, as the surgeon, La Motte.

The old merchant, in a moment, was in an agony of anxiety. Seawaif was either dead or very badly wounded, or he would have been the first to report his success, as usual. Turning to Mr. Doolittle, he expressed his fears that the captain had been slain.

"Maybe so—if he is, s'pose you'll put me in charge of the schooner as cap'n, bein' that I'm next in rank!"

Mr. Cringle did not reply to this look-aheadative supposition, or proposition, for the boat was in hailing distance, and he sung out to the doctor:

"Where is Captain Seawaif?"

"Aboard ze schoonare, sare—very sick wiz one ver grand hole in his stomach, made wiz one peel of lead, and a grand *coup* of one sabre zat 'ave disable his shouldare! We have one grand combat wiz two John Bull sheeps—one we send down to Davy Shones' lockare; ze ozzare, under ze command of Messieur Morley, is zere at anchor, as you see. Ah, Messieur! and shentilhommes, it was one grand affair—beautiful in ze extreme. We fight for two hours all same like diables; zen I amputat for seex hours more, by ze watch! Ah! it was *toute glorieuse*!"

"Is Captain Seawaif dangerously wounded?" asked Mr. Cringle of the doctor, who had by this time reached the wharf.

"No, sare—not zat he shall die! If he had 'ave eat his dinnare before he was shot, and his stomach was big, he would 'ave been kill—but he 'ave see zer enemy early in ze day, and he reserve his appetite until he 'ave take zem! Ah, ha! zere is Messieur Doolittle—if you 'ave

been wiz us, you would 'ave had ze opportunity for to *do a great deal*—my leetel toad stickare did bozzare zem John Bull mens very much. Zey slash, slash, and make a great swear wiz zeur great big cutlass; but I stick, stick wiz my rapier, and I no say nossing, but down, down go ze John Bull mens all around, wiz leetel holes in zeur stomachs. Zey 'ave eat dinnare before zey fight, and zey die more often for zat!"

"Will it be possible to have the captain removed on shore, where he can have tender nursing and attention?" asked Mr. Cringle.

"Certainement, Messieur Cringle—certainement! Wiz care he can be remove upon one littare. And zat remind me zat he send to you zis *lettare*, to tell you how we 'ave fight ze John Bull mens, and ze name of ze prize!"

While the merchant read his letter, the citizens gathered around the crew, and sought to learn all the particulars of the recent action; and many a glad exclamation told their gratification and pride, when they learned that Seawaif, after a most desperate defence upon the part of the enemy, had sunk one heavily-armed transport ship, conveying Hessian troops to our coast, and captured another, also, full of troops, arms, and military stores.

Vessels so laden, at that period, were more valuable as prizes to our government than they would have been if laden with silver and gold. Powder and lead, and arms to use them in, were more in demand than anything else in our army.

"Will you see to having Captain Seawaif removed at once to my house, doctor?" asked Mr. Cringle, after he had perused the report of the young commander.

"Wiz pleasure, sare—wiz one grand pleasure!" replied the doctor.

"Mr. Doolittle will go on board, and resume his duties as first officer of the schooner!" continued the merchant, "and I shall be glad to see you at my house whenever your duties will permit, doctor!"

"Sank you sare—sank you!" said the doctor; and he again entered the boat, with the crew and Mr. Doolittle, to go on board the schooner.

And the merchant turned to go to his house, to prepare for the reception of the wounded commander.

As he did so, he met Moses Gelson, the miser, and could not restrain exhibiting the enmity which he had shown to him for years, and which seemed to grow with his age.

"More 'powder wasted,' you see, old gripe-hard—and more prize-money in my chests!" he cried.

"I do not envy you your success, Phineas: let us be friends as we were thirty years ago!" said the miser, in a tone so meek and kind, and so different from the usual harsh, sneering manner of his replies, that the merchant was for a moment taken completely aback with surprise.

"Why, what's come over you, Moses Gelson?" he asked. "Has all of the snapping-turtle left your nature?"

"I have been thinking, to-day, of the times when we were both young men, and sought the same prize. You won: I lost; and my loss changed my nature, and made me a harsh, lonely, misanthropic, world-hating, man-hating being! I will try to be better hereafter—I will try, and Heaven help me! Phineas Cringle, let us be at peace—for the sake of one who is an angel in heaven, let us be at peace!"

"Never! you old dog of a miser, never! You dared to love *her* while she lived, and now, curse you, you dare to speak of her again, to my face! Begone, and do not speak to me again, or I'll strike you down where you stand!" shouted the merchant, turning almost black with rage, as he passed on.

"You will yet be sorry for this, Phineas Cringle," murmured the old man, in a sad tone—neither his looks nor voice indicating that he meant to imply a threat in his words.

CHAPTER XLI.

When Mr. Cringle, still agitated and excited from his recent interview with old Gelson, reached the parlor, where Kate stood, pale and anxious, with the spy-glass in her hands, her alarm became instantly fearful, for she read in his looks that he for whom she trembled, he to whom she had given her young heart's full devoted love, was *dead*, lost to her forever.

With a wild scream, and then a moan of agony, she sunk senseless to the floor.

"O Heaven! Kate, Kate, what is the matter? Kate—Kate, are you dead?" cried the terrified

merchant, as he raised and carried her to a settee. "Help—help—run here, somebody—run here, everybody!" he shouted, as he tried in vain to get an answer from her lips.

A servant woman, who entered, uttered another scream when she saw the white face of the poor girl, and acted as if she also would faint.

"Run for water, brandy, vinegar, camphor, something, everything, or my Kate will die!" groined the merchant; and then, in his agony, not knowing what else to do, he hopped right up and down, and moaned: "Oh, dear!—oh, dear!—oh, dear!"

The servant woman, who recovered from her alarm as soon as she knew that Kate was only in a faint, now hastened to use restoratives; and, to the intense relief of Mr. Cringle, Kate soon opened her eyes, with a heavy sigh, and a shudder.

"He is dead—my Edward is dead!" she moaned.

"No, Kate, no; he is only hurt, and I have sent to have him brought here to the house, where we can nurse him until he gets well!" now discovering why she had fainted, and for whom she was so alarmed. In truth, as she had not been able to see him among the rest, with her spy-glass, there seemed reason in her fears that he had been slain, the more especially that the vessel bore marks, many and large, both in her hull, spars, and canvas, of having been in a fierce and terrible engagement.

"Father! do not deceive me! I am stronger now, and can bear to hear it. I know that he is dead!" she said.

"Who do you mean, child?"

"Edward Seawaif, father!"

"I tell you that he is living, daughter!"

"Then why did I not see him among his officers and men? Why did that French doctor come on shore in the boat? I saw Mr. Morley on board of the prize, but I could not see Edward anywhere!"

"Of course not, for he was in his cabin, wounded. But if you will look now, with your glass, child, you can see them lifting him over the side into the boat, to bring him on shore! Come, cheer up, and be ready to nurse him, if you think so much of him!"

Kate, yet very feeble, and trembling all over, tottered to the window, and, while her father steadied the glass to her eye, saw that he was not deceiving her.

"Thank Heaven that he yet lives!" she sighed; and then she sunk back again to her seat, for her nerves had been fearfully shocked.

The good merchant now hastened to have a room prepared for his expected guest, and Kate assisted, as soon as she got over her fit of weakness.

CHAPTER XLII.

Two weeks had passed, and Edward Seawaif, nursed by Mr. Cringle and his daughter with a care all as tender as a son or brother ever received from a father or a sister, was not only entirely out of danger, but so far recovered, that he could move from his room, and occasionally spend an hour or two with the merchant down in his store, and there receive the visits of his many congratulating friends.

During his confinement to his room, he had gratefully noticed the tender kindness of Kate; but he either did not, or would not, ascribe it to her passionate and devoted love for him, but rather to that of natural goodness, which seems inherent to woman—who, whatever may be her faults, is ever an angel in man's hours of anguish and distress.

Now that he was better, though very grateful to her, he seemed rather to avoid than to seek her society; and this, perhaps, affected her feelings more than anything else. One thing was certain, and the anxious eye and heart of her father soon detected it—her health was failing, and though she made no complaint beyond a frequent sigh, he saw that she was drooping and fading, like a neglected flower touched by frost or left without moisture.

Knowing, as he thought he did, the reason, Mr. Cringle determined to do what, but for his love of her, both his pride and delicacy would have forbidden. So, one morning, when Seawaif was alone with him, he asked the latter if he had ever thought of matrimony.

"I have thought of such a matter!" replied the young officer, with a smile; "but I do not let such thoughts interfere with my duty or check my patriotism! I shall never surrender my freedom to a woman until my country is free!"

"In ordinary cases I should approve of such

a determination!" said the merchant. "But there might be a case where it would be right to break such a resolution!"

"In my case there is no such necessity!" said Seawaif, carelessly.

"You are not sure! Perhaps you do not understand your case!"

"I believe I do! If I do not, no one else can!"

"Pardon me, my dear captain; perhaps, now, I do! The lady, in her natural delicacy, might be more communicative to me than to you. At any rate, I, who know her so well, can tell much from my own personal observation!"

"You, sir? Why, you never saw the lady!"

"Never saw my own daughter? Why, Captain Seawaif, you must be crazy!"

"Sir, you surely are jesting with me! I have never paid any marked attentions to your daughter—never in any way acted other than with a calm respect, such as was her due as a lady and your daughter!"

"And you do not love my child?"

"I esteem and respect her as your daughter, sir; but no more! No action of mine could give her or yourself a just ground to think so! I do love a lady, one who is far away from here; and when this war is over, hope to make her my wife!"

"For the love of Heaven, do not tell Kate of it now!" said the merchant, sadly. "She could not stand it. She loves you. I have seen it for some time—known that it was growing upon her; and not dreaming that you had a thought of another, I have not tried to check it. When she supposed you had been killed instead of wounded, the shock almost caused her death. Be kind and gentle to her now; and if you cannot love her, at least let me strive with care and gentleness to gradually win her thoughts away from you. She is all that I have got to love on earth; and if she died of a broken heart, I could not survive her long!"

"I will act so far as I honorably can under your dictation!" said Seawaif—who, as a man, sensitive, honorable, generous, and full of feeling, could not but regret that which he had just been informed of.

"I will very soon be able to go to sea again!" he added, "and when I am absent, it is possible that she can gradually be brought to put her thoughts upon other subjects!"

Ah! little does he know of the human heart who thinks that the absence of one who is beloved can lessen love. Wilder, stronger, even when it is hopeless, glows the fire, which once lit, cannot go out!

But I must not think—for thought brings madness!

"The doctor thinks that I will be able in one more week to return to duty!" continued Seawaif; "and this revelation will hasten me in my determination to be afloat again as soon as possible. Our country, threatened in every portion of the sea-coast, demands the energy of every patriot mind—the strength of every arm that is able to strike in her behalf! I long again to do my part toward humbling the pride of those haughty Britons, who boast themselves invincible upon the ocean. I have done it more than once and feel that it is my destiny yet to strike many a bold and successful blow for my beloved country!"

"God bless you! yours is a noble heart! I do not wonder that my poor Kate loves you!" said the merchant. "Until I knew you, and saw that she loved you, I would have struck the man dead at my feet who hinted at ever filling my place in her love—at ever taking her as a bride! Now, my only sorrow is, that you do not love her!"

"As a brother may love a sister—as a son may love a father—so will I ever strive to regard you both!" said Seawaif, with deep feeling.

Several friends, coming in at this time, caused the subject to be dropped; and soon Seawaif retired to rest, and to think of what should be his future action.

CHAPTER XLIII.

The great blue waves of the Atlantic heaped high, and pitched wildly one over the other, off the dreaded shoals of Hatteras—for the wind, coming from the north, took the current of the Gulf Stream in the teeth, and set it into a boiling, seething rage—and with her scant canvas set to the best advantage for scudding, for she had reasons for not laying to or coming to the wind, which would have best

served her sharp hull and clipper rig in such a gale, the gallant privateer flew like a frightened bird over and through the heaving waters, scattering the foam far and wide and high up among the quivering spars.

The reasons why Seawaif was forced to scud rather than to heave to or bring his vessel by the wind, were at least ten or a dozen in number, and consisted of a whole fleet of British men-of-war, bound also to the south, which had come almost into range before, discovering their character, he bore away. Having the advantage in spread of canvas and size of hull, also in ability to drag a press of sail in such a gale, the vessels also spreading out so as to prevent his escape if he hauled on either tack to try to get the windward, his danger of capture seemed most imminent.

But Seawaif, who, though not entirely recovered, was able to keep the deck, and as he had recognized the "Bristol" in the leading ship in chase, with the broad pennant of Sir Peter Parker once more at her mast-head, he was determined never to be captured by her. For, in such a case, he well knew that Captain Morris would remember his cause of offence, and render no mercy which he could avoid.

On flew the gallant schooner under every stitch of canvas which her spars would bear—the hope of her commander being, that by gradually working in toward the coast, he might slip into some inlet or harbor on the coast of North or South Carolina, into which he could not be followed by the pursuing squadron.

The gale had set in steady, and had swept every cloud from the sky; and the moon, being at or near its full, made the nights almost as clear as the days.

That Seawaif felt anxiety is true—the proof might be seen in the fact that he would not leave his deck for a moment, night or day; but as his vessel held her own with the leading ships of the pursuing fleet, and gradually dropped others, which did not sail so well, he felt confident, that if the wind held, he would make good his escape.

"It seems tarnation strange to me that so many great ships of war should chase one poor devil of a schooner!" said Mr. Doolittle, as he stood by the side of Seawaif.

"They are not running off their course in chasing us!" said Seawaif, quietly. "That is evidently the fleet of which we heard before we sailed, intended to land troops in the South, and co-operate with them on the Carolina coasts. There are transports, as well as men-of-war in the fleet!"

"Likely it is so! I do wish the wind would shift to the southward, and give us a chance to try 'em on a bowline! If they caught us then, they might use my hat for a spit-box!"

"If this wind only holds twenty hours more, I am satisfied!" said Seawaif. "We are slowly edging in toward the coast, and that time will bring us down so that we can run into Winyaw Bay, Cape Romain, or Charleston; and then we are safe, for a time at least, for we can run into shallower water than they!"

"They've got a fort at Charleston, haven't they?" continued Doolittle.

"Yes, and gallant men to defend it. If we can once get safely over Charleston Bar, I have no fear of being taken, or what is more, being forced to blow up my vessel—for that I would do, before I'd strike my colors to the man who is in that leading ship!"

"We'd make some thunder blowin' up with full six ton of powder aboard!" said the officer, with such a dry expression, that Seawaif could not restrain a smile.

CHAPTER XLIV.

There was far more excitement on board of the "Bristol" than there was on board of the schooner, during the chase. For the latter had been recognized by all of the officers and crew of the ship, not only as the saucy deceiver of Bermuda, the capturer of the "Electra," but for her first and also her last exploit, and had got a reputation, which fairly entitled her to be termed the "Terror of the Seas."

"Well, Morris, you'll have a chance to trim his whiskers for him now, I think!" said Sir Peter, as he stood by the side of his captain, forward, and with him looked at the "chase," as she gallantly bowled away ahead of them.

"I'll do worse than singe his whiskers—he shall stretch hemp, if I have my say after we get him!" said Morris, bitterly.

"'Twould be a pity to hang such a gallant fellow!" said Sir Peter. "His fight with the 'Electra' was a fair stand-up thing, and would have knighted him, had he been upon our side. Rebel though he is, I cannot but admire his courage and audacity!"

"In his attempt upon the heart and hand of your niece and ward, Sir Peter, I think he displayed a very considerable amount of courage and audacity!"

"Poh—poh, man! You are jealous of him, and still mad at the loss of your whiskers! I wouldn't believe that she cared for a nameless rebel, even if I had it from her own lips!"

"You have not seen what I have, Sir Peter!"

"No; and I am glad that I have not, for I might have got angry, and anger brings on indigestion, and a man whose digestion is bad can't fight well!—lead is too heavy for him, and cold steel doesn't sit well on his stomach! But give yourself no fears about Lizzie. She shall soon be in safe quarters, beyond the careless care of that old rum-punchon, Sir Humphrey; and I'll warrant you that she'll soon forget the Yankee when she is among the stern hills of Yarmouth, if indeed she has ever cast a thought upon him. You may make yourself perfectly easy. I hold her fortune, and with it, her fate, in my hands; and you have my word that she shall be yours. There is no go back when I have made a promise. So be easy—your whiskers will soon grow again; and after we've taken Charleston, and taught the rebels in the South a lesson of obedience, we'll run over to Bermuda, and I'll settle matters there!"

"I wish we were only three miles closer to the infernal rascal. We don't seem to gain an inch, and hardly hold our own, if we do so much!" said Morris, who, during all of this conversation had not moved the glass from his eye.

"I should rather have her close under my battery than be in her bare range. She has a splendid piece there amidships, which might knock away our new foremast, as it did the other one!"

"The gale seems to lull a very little. I think we can stand the main to'-gallant sail over the topsails!" said Morris, looking aloft.

"We might try it, at any rate!"

"Do so!" said the commodore.

"Tell Mr. Winship to set the main top-gallant sail; and if she bears that, to get the topmast studding-sail booms ready for use!" said the captain to a middy close by his side.

"Ay, ay, sir!" said the shrill-voiced reefer; and a moment after, the officer of the deck shouted through his trumpet:

"Away aloft there, and loose the main top-gallant sail! Bear a hand about it, you monkeys!"

In a few minutes the additional canvas was on the ship, making her quivering spars buckle yet the more—but she stood it; and encouraged by this, the captain ordered a topmast studding-sail set.

"How do you think she goes now, sir—does she lift the chase any?" asked Morris of Sir Peter, whose eye was very frequently raised to the schooner.

"No; I think we've got too much canvas on the ship. She buries!" said the commodore. "Pressing her nose down into it, deadens her headway. The schooner, you see, has not set another stitch of canvas—and I'm sure we do not gain on her; on the contrary, I think we are dropping her a little!"

A muttered curse rose to the lips of Morris—it did not pass them—as he gave orders to take in the studding-sail and top-gallant sail.

It was really a beautiful sight to see upon that dark blue sea, checked like a sheep pasture with foamy fleece, those vessels staggering along under all the sail which they could carry—scattered here and there, but all steering in one direction—and all, like hounds in view, upon the track of the gallant little schooner.

"If this gale continues until to-morrow morning, we'll hold the rebel in Charleston harbor!" said Sir Peter, as he noted that the chase was gradually edging in toward the land.

"And if we do, I'll have satisfaction out of Mr. Edward Seawaif, or lose an arm in trying!" said Morris, bitterly.

CHAPTER XLV

The gale did last, and the sun of another day had just risen above the blue of the ocean in the east, when the keen eye of Seawaif, who

knew the coast well, detected the tall pines which marked the north entrance of the bay, formed by Ashley and Cooper rivers, known as Charleston harbor. As the schooner had drawn into smooth water (for the wind was sufficiently west of north now to lessen the sea and save the ground-swell), her speed increased, and the British fleet, though well in sight, had fallen considerably astern, when Seawaif had gotten sufficiently to the southward to haul up for the channel which led along the shore to the west of Sullivan's Island.

With all the sail set which he could carry, and his colors flying, Seawaif luffed for the harbor as soon as he could clear the "north breakers"—for the Beach Channel either did not then exist, or was unknown—and his gallant crew could not repress a cheer, when, after a chase of over forty hours in duration, they saw that they were safely within reach of a harbor where the guns of a fort would aid in their defence; for from Fort Moultrie waved the loved flag of their country, and its rude ramparts were lined with patriots, whose cheers echoed back the shouts of the privateer crew.

In a little while, the beautiful vessel swept by under the guns of the Palmetto fort, and while her commander had a boat lowered, and went in person to inform the commanding officer of the fort of the character of the fleet which was coming down the coast, the schooner run up to her anchorage nearer the town.

When Seawaif saw how few were the guns in the rudely-constructed fort—which was made of sand and palmetto logs—and how few men also were there to defend it, he feared for the result—little dreaming that it, like the famed breastwork at New Orleans, would gain a world-wide name, not only for a desperate and successful defence, but for the havoc and damage it would do upon the enemy.

The gallant Moultrie received him with open arms; and, to his surprise, he found himself already known—for the flag at his mast-head had designated the name and character of his vessel, and her deeds had already been heralded far and wide throughout the land.

General Lee, with a pretty large force of militia, and some regulars, was in the city; but the defence of the place would depend almost entirely upon the prevention of the entrance of the British fleet into the harbor; and to do this, Colonel Moultrie was deputed—and he swore to do it, or lose every man of his garrison at their guns.

Right joyous was he to hear Seawaif offer to assist, with his well-trained crew, in manning his batteries, and promptly did he accept the offer.

"Our greatest danger will be a lack of powder, now," said the heroic colonel. "I have not more than twenty pounds a piece for my guns!"

"I will supply you, sir, so far as I can, and will bring a boat-load of powder when I land my crew," said Seawaif.

"Your coming in has been indeed a god-send!" said Moultrie. "I can see already that it has raised the spirits of my men; and with your aid I hope soon to send those British hounds back from our coast faster than they came upon it! We have a great advantage over them in being stationary with our batteries. My guns are heavy, and will range full as far, if not further, than theirs; and now that you are here, with your gallant and experienced tars, I know that they will be well served! My men are brave, willing, and ready, but all of them have not yet smelt gun-powder or seen blood run!"

"They will soon get used to it!" said Seawaif. "My crew was literally a green one—as in truth, I was inexperienced, when I first took them into action; but they took to fighting as naturally as game-cocks, and now they seem to like it!"

"There are sails in sight to the northward, colonel," reported a subaltern officer, who had just come in from a look-out station, which had been erected upon the north-eastern end of the island.

"I will hasten to transfer my crew to your batteries!" said Seawaif, bowing and retiring—while the air resounded with the cheers of the soldiers, who were gladdened by the knowledge that they were to be reinforced from the schooner.

CHAPTER XLVI.

The twenty-eighth day of June, 1776, is one which should be ever memorable in patriotic hearts—a day which should be held ever dear by the brave and chivalrous sons of the "Palmetto State."

On the morning of that day, the British fleet, under Sir Peter Parker, took position for the purpose of silencing the batteries upon Sullivan's Island; for, unless this was done, it would be impossible to pass up the channel, and land the immense force sent under General Sir Henry Clinton to subjugate the Carolinas.

The sun rose in a cloudless sky, and there was just breeze enough to sweep the vessels into the positions chosen by the commodore.

While the ships swept into their places, and anchored head and stern, so as to bring the broadsides to bear, not a gun was fired from the fort. But stern and quiet behind their wooden ramparts stood four hundred men, ready, when the order came from Moultrie's lips, to tell the Britons that they had no business there. And he, their leader, remained as passive as if those black-hulled ships only intended to fire a salute in his honor. He smoked his pipe while he inspected their movements through his glass, and smiled when he saw them run up their flags and streamers upon every mast, while his single flag waved proudly from its short staff, above the ramparts which he had sworn to defend until death took from him and his the power to do so.

Upon the wharves and piers of the city, and along the "Bay," where now "Beauty" so loves to promenade, were crowded those whose homes he was to defend. Many a lovely cheek paled as those ships pressed on and formed the battle-line; many an eye looked through a mist of tears toward the little fort, and many a fond heart throbbed with anxious agony for the loved ones there—for, brave and patriotic as the women of our revolution were, they were human, and could tremble for those whom they loved, though they had not a fear for themselves.

The English vessels took their positions with a great deal of deliberation—with as much system as troops would display on a "field-day," and not a gun was fired until each was in its prescribed place, and every sail snugly furled to its spar.

Then from the flag-ship a signal was displayed; and a moment after, those who lined the wharves of the city saw a line of white, wreathy smoke burst from the side of every vessel. And soon, with a single sound, like the burst of terrible, but distant thunder, came the noise of those united broadsides to their ears.

Anxiously they looked toward the fort, to see if or not that terrible fire of over one hundred and fifty cannon, centering upon one small point, one hastily-constructed fort, had not swept away its defences, sacrificed its Spartan garrison.

They could not, at that distance, tell what had been the result of the fire. The flag still waved above the low rampart of the fort; but all was still there as death. What could it mean? Were the defenders terror-stricken—dumb from fear?

Again the rattling broadsides of the British ships threw their shower of iron hail upon the breast of the gallant little fort. And still no groan came from its proud heart! What could be the matter?

Let us go and see. As each of the enemy's ships came into position, Edward Seawaif, acting as aid to the gallant Moultrie, and *chef d'artillerie* for the fort, went from gun to gun, to arrange it for the execution which it was shortly to perform.

"There's no hurry, boys," said Moultrie, with a smile, as he checked the impatience of his men. "There's no hurry—let them waste their powder; when we fire, we'll get the worth of our ammunition!"

Three full broadsides had been poured into the fort before a single gun from thence gave answer.

At last, one shot—it was from the battery manned by the crew of the "Tyrannicide"—was fired, and a thousand voices joined, in a glad cheer, as they saw one of the tall topmasts of the flag-ship, with its taunting banner, come tumbling down.

And then, not in bursts or broadsides, but in single shots, each one making spars fall and splinters fly from the dark hulls of the enemy, the batteries of the fort began to talk! Slowly and steadily, watching where the last shot struck, and improving in aim as they got their range, the Americans wasted not a single charge of powder. Meanwhile, from every one of the British ships came broadside after broadside, until they were so enveloped in their own smoke that it was night, sulphur-

ous night all around them, and the Americans could only tell by the flashes of their guns where the enemy was. But they had their range, and little need had they even to sight a gun, for every shot found a home in British oak.

If the boast of "Britannia rules the waves" was on her seaman's lips that day, they had good cause to believe that she could not rule the shore.

Steadily, but not firing one gun to twenty of the enemy, the little fort did its duty. The officers within seemed to be merely practicing for pleasure; and they smoked their pipes as pleasantly, while they went from gun to gun and cheered with praises their brave men, as if death had no privileges among them.

Once during the day, Lee—that general who would have been an Arnold, had he had an Arnold's opportunity and temptations—visited the fort; and though he had been war-worn and battle-tempered in the old world, ere he took up arms in this, he candidly confessed that never had he seen such admirable coolness under fire, such utter *sang froid* in danger as was then and there exhibited.

The fort had only twenty-six guns with which to answer over three hundred—if all of the enemy's guns were brought into use.

Thus, for hours the battle raged on. Once, and once only, did the fears of those who watched from the city become great—once and once only, did the suffering foe hope for victory. Suddenly, after one of the heavy united broadsides had sent its iron shower against the fort, the flag which had waved above its wooden walls was seen to fall. Then a cheer rose from every British lip, and the American spectators held their breath, for they thought all was lost.

But see! an American sergeant, JASPER—write high his name upon the patriot's scroll of immortal fame—leaps over the low breastwork, seizes the fallen banner, affixes it to the staff, and in the face of the bursting shot places it once more where it can be seen by friend and foe.

Again hope rises in American breasts, and falls in the bosoms of their foes.

At one time the smoke hides the English vessels altogether from view, and then their fire so slackens that the defenders of the fort can mark the effect of each shot.

Seawaif had signalled out the "Bristol" for his particular aim. Marking his name on a shot, he had it placed in a cannon, and soon saw that very shot knock two ports into one on board of the "Bristol." And not long after, a shell which fell near him, but which did not explode—for a brave man drew the fuse—was exhibited to him, bearing the name of Morris.

The rivals in love and war had exchanged cards.

It was almost right; and yet, on either side, the fearful fire continued. One of the English frigates had been shot from her moorings, and drifted on to a bar. Two other vessels had also grounded. Once, the spring to the "Bristol's" cable being cut away, she "tailed" stern on to the fort, and every shot which struck her raked her fore and aft, making terrible havoc. Poor Morris was fated that day! for after he had used superhuman exertions to cheer up the crew and make their fire destructive, a shot struck him, and mangled him horribly, but still living, he was carried below.

Sir Peter, though badly wounded, and at times without an officer by his side, and deprived of full half of his crew, stood stern and fearless upon his quarter-deck, and gave his orders calmly, until a new spring was got upon the cable, and his broadside, once more, was open to the fort.

Terrible was the day—terrible to the foe, glorious to the cause of freedom. Night came on, and still war's dire labor was not ended. Sullenly, gun replied to gun; still the loud echoes of cannonry rolled over the water to the ears of those who watched from the city—those who no longer trembled for the result of the day's battle; but looked to see every British ship go down at her anchor.

And had not friendly Night—who so often puts her dark hand between battling foes—interposed, not a ship of that proud fleet had ever reached the ocean's blue again.

As it was, the "Acteon" frigate lay disabled on the bar, and had to be destroyed; and the rest of the enemy's ships crawled away, shattered in hull and tattered aloft, in the darkness and gloom of the night; and Carolina, for the time, was free from danger.

But only for a time. Tarleton was fated to run his *raid* of blood—Hayne was doomed to suffer—Jasper was to fall—fire and steel was to work many a bitter woe in the land of Marion, of Moultrie, of Horry, of Pinckney, and of Sumner. But go to history to read of that—our path is on the sea!

CHAPTER XLVII.

The shattered vessels of the almost disabled fleet of Sir Peter Parker had drawn off the inhospitable coast which had welcomed them only to their graves; and each ship was directed to make the best of her way to the general rendezvous which had been appointed.

In the cabin of the "Bristol" was occurring an event which, in justice to a brave man, we must describe. Captain Morris lay upon his cot, suffering from his death-wound. Though agony drew from his brow great drops of sweat, not a murmur broke from his lips.

The commodore, Sir Peter (himself wounded but not disabled), stood by his side, and heard, with deep regret, the decision of the surgeons, which told him that he must lose his friend and favorite officer.

"I have no one to mourn me," said the dying officer. "I have done my duty!"

"I shall mourn till I follow you to the grave, brave shipmate, and true friend!" said the commodore, with deep feeling.

"I'm sorry they whipped us—the rebels will crow over this day!" continued Morris.

"Do not think of that! The war is not ended—we will yet make them rue even *this* victory," said Sir Peter.

"No—they will conquer in the end," said the dying man. "Curse them, *luck* is with them!"

"Well—well, do not think of them. Is there anything I can do for you?—any wish I can execute?"

"Yes, *one*!"

"Name it, my dear Morris, name it, and it shall be attended to!"

"Lizzie will be free now, so far as I am concerned!" gasped the dying man. "I care not who she weds, if it be not Edward Seawaif. Promise me that she shall never bear that hated name!"

"I promise that she shall not!" said the commodore, as he grasped the already death-chilled hand of his brave friend.

"Heaven bless you, commodore!—God save the king!—and—"

A gasp, and the spirit of the gallant officer went aloft, leaving that which he would have said unuttered.

After the firing had ceased, Moultrie, accompanied by Seawaif and others of his officers, visited the temporary hospital in the rear of the fort, to see how the wounded were getting along, and to say a cheering word to them.

They found Doctor La Motte, with the other surgeons, as cheerful and busy as they could be.

"How do you like matters, doctor?" asked the colonel, as he approached our surgeon.

"Passable, mon cher colonel—passable," said the doctor, shrugging up his shoulders. "We have had a few case of amputat; but nossing, nossing sare, to zat which zey must 'ave had on board ze John Bull sheeps! Ah, colonel, if I had only been zere, I should 'ave had all ze amputat zat I desire! Many times I sink of zat while I see how your cannon balls go into zeur sheeps! I do not like ze fight wiz in the fort, zere is not enough of ze amputat for me!"

The colonel could not but smile at the professional zeal of the doctor, though he had no wish to see such havoc among his own men as would satisfy the doctor's *amputative* gluttony.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

It was but a few days after the body of the gallant Morris—sewed up in a sailor's canvas coffin, and wrapped in the flag beneath whose folds he had received his death-wound—had been consigned to the bosom of the deep, when the look-out from the mast-head of the "Bristol" sighted the land for which the ship had been steered—Bermuda's ever-lovely isle. And within a few hours, the "Bristol" was once more at an anchor in the well-known harbor.

Sir Peter Parker in a very short time landed, and soon stood upon the threshold of the governor's residence, where he was received with

unusual warmth by Sir Humphrey—who longed for more companionship—for he had not had any visitors for a considerable length of time.

Lizzie was there to welcome her uncle; but his manner was very cold and chilling to all—so much so, that Sir Humphrey could not but take notice of it, and ask why he acted in such a distant manner.

"When I left my niece and ward here, I supposed that you were both loyal and honorable," said the commodore.

"So I am; and he lies who says that I am not," said Sir Humphrey, angrily.

"Softly, softly," said Sir Peter. "I believe that but a few weeks have elapsed since you permitted a rebel privateer to visit in this port, and allowed her rebel commander to make love to my ward!"

"Your ward will exonerate Sir Humphrey from all fault in the matter; for he did not know that she was American, until she was beyond these waters," said Lizzie, with spirit.

"Perhaps my fair and loyal niece cannot say so much for herself," said the angry commodore, sneeringly.

"She has no fears in regard to herself, and only wishes Sir Peter Parker to pass as blameless those who *are* so!" replied the brave girl.

"I have heard, Miss Egerton, of your flirtation with the Yankee rebel; but it came to a timely end. Had he not fled as he did, poor Morris would have taught him the use of British HEMP!" said Sir Peter, bitterly.

"How does poor Morris survive the loss of his whiskers?" asked Lizzie, full as bitterly.

"Girl! mock not the dead!" said the commodore, sternly.

"Dead? Is Captain Morris dead?" asked Lizzie.

"Yes—died bravely; died as he had lived—like a man!"

"It is well!" sighed Lizzie. "He can suffer no more. It is well!"

"Well for him—better than for you? You, girl, are his widow! I know your heart; but disappointment awaits its every hope! I promised him, in his dying moments, that you should never bear the name of Seawaif!"

"You never had the right to say whose name I should bear, Sir Peter Parker!" said the brave girl. "Nor, when I choose to change my name, will I ask your consent. Play the tyrant if you will—never had a monarch more rebellious subject than I will prove myself!"

"We'll see, mad girl—we'll see! Within a week you will be on your way to the English coast; and once there, you shall know whether or not such guardianship as mine is to be rebelled against. I'll tame your spirit down, if life has to sink with it!"

"Yes—for with my death an accession to your fortune will be made," said Lizzie, more bitterly than before. "Oh, you are a brave, good, DEAR uncle!—a most trusty guardian! My father chose wisely when he selected Sir Peter Parker!"

"Yes; for his honor's sake he did," said the commodore, sternly. "I will not let his child throw herself away upon a nameless rebel! But get you gone to your room—I have business with Sir Humphrey, and want no officious women about me. Remember—you will sail for England within a week!"

"I rejoice to hear it, for duty will not take you there, tyrant," said Lizzie, as she turned away, angrily, and went to her chamber.

CHAPTER XLIX.

"Dear, good Sir Humphrey, I do not know how to thank you—how ever to repay you and dear Venona for the sacrifices which you have made for me! You have resigned your place and—"

"Poh, poh, poh! blossom. Don't speak of it! I was tired of the place—it was too dull—not a soul to crack a bottle with. I was getting as lean as a church-mouse there! And ten chances to one I'd have been turned out, if I hadn't resigned! That is the truth. By resigning, I save my credit; and it can never be said of me, that I was turned out of office!"

"That is so, my father," said Venona. "We will be happier in good, peaceful old England, than ever we were in Bermuda!"

"Sir Peter little thought, when he sailed from Bermuda, that I would be the escort of his niece back to her native land," said the baronet. "If he had, he might not have been so willing to intrust you to my care; for he dis-

trusted my wisdom very much, and my loyalty more, when I dared to say that, rebel or not, Captain Seawaif had acted like a gentleman!"

This conversation, which occurred on board the good English transport brig "Coraline," then ten days out from Bermuda, and bound home to England, was suddenly interrupted by the cry of "sail ho!" from the look-out.

"Where away, and what is she?" cried the commander of the transport, as he seized his spy-glass.

"Broad on the weather-bow, sir, and seems to be square-rigged!" was the answer.

The breeze was fresh; and the brig, carrying all the sail which she could well stagger under, was close-hauled on a bow-line, but still on her course.

"We are out of the track of Yankee cruisers, I should think!" muttered the captain; but, nevertheless, he felt uneasy, and went aloft with his glass, to reconnoitre the strange sail.

He did not stay there long, but soon came down, with a face which expressed great anxiety.

"What nation do you think she belongs to?" asked Sir Humphrey.

"She's Yankee as *beans*, sir!" growled the captain.

"Is she large?—can't you fight her?" asked the baronet, who did not lack in courage.

"What can *we* do with only fifteen men, all told, and four useless little pop-guns. Six-pounders are only fit to bark at South-Sea Islanders with, to scare them away. It's likely that fellow yonder, who is coming down on us, with everything set aloft and below, carries eighteens or thirty-twos!"

"If you can't fight him, why don't you run?" asked the baronet.

"We'll make a pretty mess in trying to run away from a copper; but there's no harm in trying," said the skipper. "Hard up your helm, there! Round in the weather-braces, some of you, and square the yards. Away aloft, and loose the royals, and rig out the stun-sail booms! Bear a hand, if you don't want to chaw Johnny-cake!"

With her course altered, and all the canvas which she could show spread, the brig's headway increased materially; but still the strange sail, "*rose*," with a rapidity which proved her to be indeed a clipper.

"There's no use—we might as well lay-to and let her come up, for she goes three knots to our one!" growled the skipper of the transport. "But, curse me, if she shan't have something for her trouble! Get your arms men—double load every gun, I'll not strike my flag till she has tasted cold iron!"

"Spoken like a true Briton!" cried Sir Humphrey, slapping the captain on the back. "Come into the cabin, and take a drink with me, and then I'll get my arms, and help to defend the vessel while a plank of her floats!"

"Captain," said Lizzie, who for some time had been looking at the vessel in chase, through the glass which the skipper had laid down—"If you will shorten sail and heave to, and make no resistance, I will pledge my life that the vessel which is following us will permit you to proceed on your voyage in safety, after her commander knows who are your passengers. He is an old friend of ours!"

"Why, blossoms, what d'ye mean?" cried the astonished baronet.

"That the vessel in sight is the 'Tartar,' alias the 'Tyrannicide!'"

"The deuce, you say! Then heave to, captain, just as soon as you can. Blossom, here, speaks the truth—her commander would sooner blow his own brains out than lay a straw in her way! If he is a rebel, he is as fine a fellow as ever drew breath! You needn't blush, blossom, I mean what I say!"

The captain of the transport, though rather dubious about the clemency which the Yankee schooner would show him, hove to; for he saw that escape was impossible, and that resistance against her armament and force would be madness.

And while the baronet went into the cabin with him to fortify the inner man with a modicum of brandy, the ladies, with that desire to look well which is a component part of woman's nature, hurried to improve their toilet, for two hearts bounded in their bosoms with the thought that they were soon to meet those for which alone they throbbed.

CHAPTER L

The baronet and the ladies stood out of sight when the schooner ranged up alongside, or

rather on the weather-quarter of the brig, and heaving her two topsails aback, became stationary, for Lizzie desired to surprise Seawaif after he had come on board of the vessel—if he came in person to take possession of the transport.

"Brig ahoy—what brig is that?" asked Seawaif, in his clear, manly tone, as he came within half-pistol shot and easy hail.

"The British brig 'Coraline'." What vessel is that?" replied the captain.

"The American privateer 'Tyrannicide.' Haul down your colors and you shall be well treated! You are my prize—I'll send an officer to take possession of you!"

"One of my passengers suggests that you had better come yourself!" said the captain.

"One of your passengers?" said Seawaif, in surprise.

"Yes, sir—a lady, who sends her compliments to Captain Seawaif!"

"A lady? Where are you from?"

"Bermuda!" answered the captain.

No further questions were asked of him; but a boat was lowered from the quarter davits of the schooner about as quickly as ever it had been done, and as the ladies and Sir Humphrey now deigned to show themselves, two officers were seen to leap into her stern-sheets; and in almost as short a space of time as it has taken me to describe it, Seawaif and Morley stood upon the deck of the transport, shaking hands with Lizzie, Venona, and good, jolly, happy Sir Humphrey.

"Little did I expect to have the happiness of seeing you so soon, ladies, and you also my kind Sir Humphrey!" said Seawaif, as he stood and gazed upon the group.

"I expected they'd turn me out for being so blind that I couldn't tell a *rebel* from a loyalist, and so I turned myself out of office to save them the trouble!" said Sir Humphrey. "But poor Lizzie here is under sentence of banishment to Sir Peter Parker's estate, and my blossom won't part with her, so I thought I'd act as escort to both!"

"My colors are down, sir—what are your orders concerning my vessel?" asked the captain of the brig.

"You can hoist your colors again, sir; and I will trust to the honor of your owners to remit a reasonable ransom, as justice to my crew and owners, whom I have no right to deprive of their prize-money!" said Seawaif, in a kind tone.

"God bless you sir!—if the brig had been captured, I should have been ruined; for all I have in the world is invested in her! Name your ransom, and on the honor of a British seaman, I will have it sent to you!" said the captain, with deep feeling.

"And I'll go his security for that!" said the baronet.

"Were I to take the value of your *live* freight into consideration, your ransom would be a heavy one," said Seawaif, with a smile. "But I will be as easy as I can for the sake of those whom you carry!"

"Thank you, sir—I shall never forget you! If all of those who are called rebels are so generous, they will not long find British seamen to fight against them!"

"I know you'll excuse me while I go into the cabin to get some drinkables ready," said the baronet. "I see that Mr. Morley has taken my blossom in tow, as you sailors say."

And good Sir Humphrey darted away and left both the young men *tête-à-tête* with the ladies—a situation it may well be supposed not at all disagreeable to them.

"How did Captain Morris relish the loss of his whisker?" asked Seawaif, of Lizzie.

"Poor fellow! he is dead; and we will speak of him no more!" said Lizzie.

"Dead? How and when did he die?"

"At sea, of wounds received in the late attack of my uncle's squadron upon Charleston."

"Heavens!—I was in that action! My vessel having been chased into the harbor by your uncle's fleet, I and my crew volunteered to do service in the fort which beat him off!"

"How strange! Well, his suit can trouble me no more; but even in the hour of death he did not forget you—for he made my uncle promise that I should never be your bride!"

"Your uncle's promise is not your own, thank Heaven!" said the young American.

"No—nor shall it bind me!" said the lovely girl.

"Sail ho!" cried the look-out from the mast-head of the brig.

"What do you see there?" asked Seawaif, quickly.

"Two sail away up in the weather-board, sir, just lifting; I cannot make out what their rig is yet."

"They may be British ships—we must part now, dearest lady, but I will see you very soon again. Ask no questions; and no matter when or how you meet me, evince no surprise; nor, if in company, recognize me—for I am a wild adventurer, and fond of maskading, and you may again see me in a British uniform."

"The *bibles* are all ready—come and wet a lip, gentlemen!" cried the baronet, from the cabin door, at this moment.

"A single glass, and we must part!" said Seawaif. "There are strange sails in sight, and I must see what they are. By the way, captain, give me writing materials, and I will write a certificate that you are under ransom, which will protect you from any other of our cruisers which may overhaul you."

The document was soon written, a friendly glass of wine taken, the parting words spoken, and the two officers returned to the schooner.

As the brig filled away on her course, her crew gave three hearty and thankful cheers, which were speedily returned by the Americans, who, hauling their larboard tacks aboard, and bracing sharp up, soon shot away at an angle from the brig heading up for the strange sails which had just been discovered.

When La Motte heard that Sir Humphrey was on board of the brig, his sorrow was great that he could not have seen him.

"O *malheur*!" said he. "It was one grand pleasure to become intoxicated with *ze* governare—he holds so much in *ze* stomach before it affect his brain. It was admirable to observe!"

And, with a sigh, the doctor went to his room, to take a private drink to Sir Humphrey's health.

CHAPTER LI.

As soon as he had parted company from the brig, Seawaif tore his thoughts away from the loved one there, and with that stern moral force which is Heaven's best gift to a brave, true man, drew his mind down obedient to his duty—to the duty which he owed to his country, his crew, the owner of his vessel, and himself.

He took his glass, and hurried aloft to see, if possible, before they closed, what was the character of the stranger vessels; which, if enemies, would have a great advantage over him in being to windward; for his craft, which was sharp-built, sailed best when beating up on the wind, and was most dull in running off before it.

He remained aloft for a long time, until the brig had run almost hull down to the eastward, and the strange sails were quite hull up on his starboard bow.

At last he came down, and at once ordered the vessel cleared for action, and everything made ready to crowd on sail.

His men and officers hastened to obey his orders, though they asked no questions—for he was one who did not permit it. Mr. Doolittle, upon whose head the bump of curiosity was very prominent, often raised his glass to look at the strange sails, and would have liked to learn what the captain supposed them to be, but he had been too often rebuked for asking questions prematurely, to wish to offend again.

But at last he made up his mind to hazard a leading remark, and said:

"Them craft are square in rig, and look heavy, sir."

"Yes!" replied Seawaif.

"I shouldn't wonder if they turned out to be men-o'-war!" continued Mr. Doolittle.

"Nor I!" returned his taciturn commander.

"Do you think they're American, sir?"

"No—if I did, I should not clear ship for action!" said Seawaif, quietly. "Look to the sails and rigging, and have preventer stays and braces ready. The breeze is freshening, and if we have to run, we may have to drag canvas heavily."

"Ay, ay, sir!" said the officer, whose curiosity was now satisfied.

"Are *zein* John Bull mens, *Messieur le Capitaine*?" asked La Motte, coming on deck, visibly improved after his visit to the cabin.

"Yes, doctor; we may have some more fighting soon!" said Seawaif, with a smile.

"Eh, bien! Zat will please me very much. I 'ave one grand desire for more opportunities to amputat! Ah, sare, no ones but *ze* children of science can appreciate *ze* beauty, *ze* pleasure, *zat* *ze*re is in *ze* amputat, *ze* bone-set, *ze* ball extract!" said the doctor, with enthusiasm. "If I shall 'ave my choice to live forevare upon

ze world, wizout ze amputat, or die to-morrow and go ze place where ze diable reign supreme, and zere to 'ave plenty of ze amputat to do, I shall prefer to die more zan to live!"

"But, doctor, that is rather a hard-hearted desire. It hurts men to lose their legs or arms!"

"Ah, no, mon cher capitaine, not if ze operation is conduct wiz skill! In tree or four minute I make ze incision, take up ze arterrie, saw off ze bone, and all is oware, and ze patient 'ave not know but very leetel vat 'ave hurt heem! Ah! mon cher capitaine, it is science zat make even death lose all its terrore! But excuse me, I shall go to prepare my instruments!"

"Darn me! if I don't believe the doctor would refuse vittels, if he was starving, if he had only a chance to cut off a leg or an arm!" muttered Mr. Doolittle, as the doctor went into the cabin.

Then again the demon of curiosity took possession of the lieutenant's spirits—he had seen the flutter of silk or calico on board of the English brig, and had been told that she had been allowed to proceed upon a ransom bond—a matter not uncommon in the annals of privateering. But he wanted much to know who the ladies were, and why Mr. Morley had been so anxious to go on board the brig with the captain; for through his spy-glass he had examined the fair ones while they stood *fête-à-fête* with their lovers.

"I seen women aboard that 'ere brig, didn't I, cap'n?" he asked.

"If you used your eyes, you had a chance to!" said Seawaif.

"Mr. Morley seemed as thick with one of 'em as if he'd seen her before!" continued the hunter "after knowledge under difficulties."

"Probably," said Seawaif, smiling, for he saw the drift of the lieutenant, and was determined not to gratify him.

"I don't like women!" continued Mr. Doolittle.

"I presume not, if they understand *knitting*!" said Seawaif, to whom Kate Cringle had related the mitten-scene, while he lay wounded at her father's house.

"Darnation, them lubbers are reeving that fore-topmast stun-sail geer all wrong!" said the mate, turning as red as a turkey's comb in the face, and going forward to conceal his confusion; for until now he had not known that the captain was aware of his scene with Kate.

Seawaif again took his glass, and, ascending the weather rigging some ten or a dozen ratlines high, scanned the vessels, which were now rapidly nearing him, with an anxious eye. Having looked at them for some time, and also studied the weather, which looked wild and threatening, he came to the deck again, and calling his officers to his side, bade them put on their English uniforms.

"I must get the weather-gage of those ships!" said he. "They are men-of-war, and double-deckers at that; and, with a free wind in a sea-way, will give us a tough pull—most likely overhaul us. If I can fool them into the belief that I'm English, or a prize, and get to windward, all will be well; for on a wind, with whole spars and out of range of their broadsides, I wouldn't care if every ship in the British navy were in chase of me!"

The officer hastened to obey his orders, and the English colors were got ready for hoisting, while the "Electra's" signals and signal-book were also brought out, to be ready in case the Englishmen should ask questions with their bunting.

And in addition to these preparations, the schooner was cleared for action, her guns cast loose, magazine opened, fires put out, and arms all placed where they could be put in hand in a moment.

CHAPTER LII.

Under her large fore-and-aft sails, and single-reefed topsails, with top-gallant sails set above them, the schooner made fair headway and beautiful weather, laying up within four points of the wind, or thereabouts; and though it had been sometime after meridian when the ships were first sighted, it was not yet night when they were close aboard, bearing down under a cloud of canvas; for having the roll of the sea with them, and a free wind, their spars could bear double the sail which they could have stood up under if brought to on a bow-line, with their tacks hauled aboard.

As Seawaif expected, the English vessels commenced signaling to each other, before they were fairly in range of line, for he had hoisted English colors, and they seemed both-

ered at his boldness—for no one could mistake the American build of his vessel. But by this they got no advantage of him whatever—a copy of their signal-book was in his hand, and he could read bunting, and talk it, as well as they.

The ships having run their numbers up at their fore-truck, he had but to glance at his signal-book and navy-list, to see that the double-decked frigates "Thunderer" and "Etna" were coming in range of him.

"What schooner is that?" asked they, in signal.

"The 'Tyrannicide'—a prize to His Majesty's ship 'Bristol,' bound home with dispatches!" replied Seawaif, also by signal, long before the other vessels were in hail.

As he stood steadily on his course, and showed no signs of alarm or of a disposition to evade the frigates, and this reply tallied with her evidently American build and rig, the crews of the frigates, which had been called to quarters, were piped down, and preparations made on board of them to shorten sail.

"You will heave to, to take our letter-bags!" was the next signal from the leading frigate, to which Seawaif answered: "All right—we will."

As usual, the crew and officers of the schooner, relying with unfaltering confidence on him who had so far led them only to victory, through every danger, were as calm and composed as he appeared to be, and in him not a trace of anxiety or agitation could be seen.

In a little while, one of the frigates was rounding to, not more than a half musket-shot to windward of him, while the other was doing the same so close under his lee, that her commander easily hailed him without a trumpet.

"What officer commands the prize?" he asked, for though he had recognized the British uniforms through his glass, he did not recognize the officers.

"Lieutenant Sinclair, late of the 'Tartar,' which was wrecked on Bermuda reef, a few weeks ago, sir!" said Seawaif, readily.

"I thought I was some on lying, but the cap'n takes the rag clean off my bush!" said Doolittle, delighted at witnessing such perfection in the art.

In a minute, the frigate had fallen too far to leeward to have her commander's voice heard; and as they expected, of course, to see the schooner heave to, they only busied themselves in taking in their own sail, and getting their letter-bags and boats ready.

Easing his bow-lines a trifle, and giving the sails a clean full, the schooner shot ahead with a speed which was rapidly carrying her out of range to windward of the frigates, and she had got full a mile and a half ahead before it seemed to be noticed by them that she had not come to.

Then their bunting was seen running up in a hurry.

"Heave to—we want to send letters home by you!" was the signal made.

"Haven't time!" was the reply which soon fluttered from the schooner's mast-head.

A gun was fired to windward from the nearest frigate, which now braced up her main yards, which had been thrown aback.

The schooner was now out of ordinary range and Seawaif proudly gave orders to hoist the American flag over the English, that they might see how nicely his Yankee wit had given him the weather-gage.

Scarcely had he done so, before the frigate opened her entire broadside upon him; but, fortunately, not a single shot touched the vessel, though some dropped close aboard.

"You may give him one blessing from long Tom, Mr. Brownell!" said the American commander, "and then we'll drop company with them. They're not profitable customers; there's more hard knocks than prize-money to be got from them!"

The old gunner carefully sighted his gun and sent his iron messenger so truly, that the fore-yard of the frigate was seen to part in the slings, sending the fore-sail and fore-topsail all awrift, and of course, injuring the headway of the ship.

Night was now drawing on, and the wind rising fast. So Seawaif ordered the top-gallant sails in, and the guns secured, for he had a clear weather-gage of the enemy, and was safe from their pursuit.

Soon darkness came on, and then, first ordering every light put out, he bore away, and steered the course which he had been on when the brig was first sighted, for the Island of Cuba, where he intended to take in water, and give his men a run on shore, preparatory to a cruise toward the windward islands.

CHAPTER LIII.

Two weeks after Seawaif had so nicely fooled the two English frigates, his beautiful vessel lay in the quiet and lonely bay of Matanzas; and, well provided with money, his crew, one half at a time, were allowed to go on shore for recreation.

If there was one single thing beyond his favorite dish of pork and molasses which Mr. Doolittle delighted in, it was the "olla podrida" which none but the Spanish can make. It was rather too rich a dish to suit the doctor—who, though something of a gourmand in his way, preferred a *poulet fricassée*, or a *soup de bœuf margre*, or an *omelette soufflée*, to either Doolittle's choice, or the dish *famille* of Spain. Yet they were destined to dine together on the first day that they visited the shore, and the only dish placed before them was that compounded of everything, known as "Olla Podrida."

Into this Mr. Doolittle pitched with an earnestness which, if it excited no wonder in the servants at the "Posada del Estrangeros," aroused a more evident passion in the breast of the worthy doctor.

"You partak of zis dinnare wiz one grand aj petite, Monsieur Dooleetel!" said the surgeon, turning up his sharp nose, as if its flavor did not strike him very agreeably.

"Sartain! Good grub always makes me hungry!" said the lieutenant, helping himself to a fresh plate-full.

"For ze benefit of science, I desire to know of you one sing, very much, Monsieur Dooleetel!"

"What's that, doctor?"

"It is, sare—excuse me, and do not take offence—it is, wezzare or not your stomach extend down to your feet, like ze marrow of ze bone, for many time I have observe zat you eat more zan it seem possible in nature zat your stomach shall contain!"

"Darnation! Do you mean to insult me again doctor? You're always picking at me, like a turkey at a chicken!"

"Sare, I do not mean to insult you; but if you do so considare, why, my toad-stickare is at your service. But one ang I assure you; if ever I 'ave ze honor to see you without life, I shall examine you, *post mortem*, to see wezzare or not you 'ave an extension of ze stomach!"

"Thank you for nothin' doctor—I hope you'll never have the chance!"

"Perhaps not for zat. But perhaps for ze amputat, yes! You will be very easy for amputat. Zere is not much blood, and very leetel meat in you—and ze bone, it is *bon* large, and vill saw strong wizout crack or splinture. If ever I 'ave ze chance for amputat, your leg or your arm, Monsieur Dooleetel, I shall make one beautiful job!"

"Yes, if you have the chance, which I hope will be never!" said Doolittle, rather testily, for he could not appreciate the pleasure which the doctor felt in doing a good job in that line.

"You do not know!" said the doctor. "Zere is no fortune like ze fortune of war. A man zat is good for nossing is as liable to be keel as one who is good for everysing! A man zat is lean may be ze receptacle for lead or steel, all ze same as heem who is fat."

"Hallo! there's a gun from the schooner!" cried the lieutenant, springing from the table, and hurrying to a window from which he had a view of the harbor. "And there's the *cornet* up, a signal for all hands aboard. I wonder what's the matter, now!"

"I propose zat we shall go and see!" said the doctor; and after settling for their unfinished meal, the two officers hastened away.

CHAPTER LIV.

The gun and signal of general recall was very hastily obeyed by the officers and well-disciplined crew of the schooner, and as they hurried down to the landing-place, or mole, all of the boats of the vessel were found there ready to take them on board. Mr. Morley himself came in charge of the boats to hasten the embarkation.

"What in tarnation is the matter? What does the cap'n want us for?" asked Mr. Doolittle of Morley, as he arrived, almost breathless at the landing-place.

"There is a whole British fleet outside and coming in, and as they are none too apt to respect neutral waters, the captain wishes all hands on board, for we may have to fight our way out!"

"I wish old Nick had 'em! They've spoiled my dinner—I was up to my eyes in the best mess that ever a hungry chap worked jaws on, when I heard the gun and saw the cornet!" growled the lieutenant.

"More John-Bull mens—more fight, eh! Monsieur Morley?" asked the doctor.

"Yes, sir—there's a fair showing for it, as the woman said when her husband capsized the wash-bowl!"

"Eh, bien! I care nossing zat I lose my dinnare, if by-and-by I can recompense wiz a chance for amputat!" said the doctor, as he sprang into a boat.

The schooner lay at anchor some ways down the harbor; and close under the guns of the fort, which stands on the starboard hand, seen when you are coming in. But the crews pulled at their oars with a will, and in a very short time all hands were on board of the gallant little craft, which had already been made ready for action, if a necessity for such an act should occur. Her guns, double-shotted, were run out—springs were on her cable, and she lay broadside to anything which could approach her from the sea, as now were some half-dozen ships of various sizes, under the lead of a double-decker, which carried a commodore's pennant.

"There is our old friend, the 'Bristol!'" said Seawaif to Doolittle, as he pointed to the leading ship, which was now standing up the harbor, and was not a half mile distant.

"Damnation! So 'tis!" said the lieutenant. "I shouldn't wonder if they tried to take us right here on *neuter* ground, just for spite!"

"They will hardly dare to so act in the face of the law of nations!" said Seawaif. "But if they do attempt it, no hostile foot shall press this deck while I live! If they try to take us, I will fight to the last gasp, and sink with my colors flying! Hoist every flag to its place!"

Seawaif was not conscious that his feelings had carried him so far beyond his usual composure, that he had spoken loud enough to be heard by most of the crew, until three hearty cheers burst from their lips in response to his words.

"I thank you, my brave lads!" he said, in reply to this demonstration. "I know that you'll stand by me so long as one flank of our bonny craft floats above water!"

"Ay, that we will, sir!" was the shout; and when their motto-flag was unfurled to the breeze, again they rent the air with their loud and fearless cheers.

While this occurred, the British ships were ranging up into the anchorage, and one by one, barely out of cable's length of the schooner, they came to an anchor. Seawaif who, with his glass in hand, was closely watching their movements, saw that, with angry and sullen looks, many an officer on the different vessels was likewise occupied in regarding his craft and her proud and saucy flags. Soon he observed signals hoisted on the flag-ship.

Sending for his "signal-book," he began to read them.

The signal was: "The captains of the fleet will come on board of the flag-ship to attend a council of war."

"So, they are going to hold a consultation, and see whether it is best to attempt to take me in the harbor of a neutral nation!" muttered Seawaif. "I hope they'll have a good time in their deliberations."

Scarcely were the sails of the different ships furled, before a boat left each of them, with her commander, in obedience to the signal.

Seawaif now deemed it best to send Mr. Morley on shore, to inform the commander of the fort that he considered himself, by the laws of neutrality, under the protection of his guns; and as the Spaniards of that island were by no means friendly to the English, he hoped to be informed, in reply, that the fort would not tamely permit his rights to be outraged.

After the consultation of officers on board the flag-ship had been called for an hour or more, a boat was seen coming from the "Bristol" toward the "Tyrannicide." A lieutenant, in full uniform and armed, was in the boat.

Seawaif retired to his cabin, giving orders to Mr. Doolittle to receive the officer, and also to have the crew at their quarters, so that the lieutenant could report on his return that the schooner was ready for action, if it was forced upon her.

The British officer came alongside; and was permitted to come on board, but Mr. Doolittle informed him that the boat's crew must remain in their boat, and not offer to come aboard.

"I wish to see your captain, sir," said the

officer. "I have a message for him from Commodore Sir Peter Parker."

"It can be communicated through me," said Mr. Doolittle. "Captain Seawaif will hold no communication with a person of less rank than himself."

"I'd like to know who gave him a commission," said the officer, with a sneer.

"The American Congress, sir," replied Doolittle. "And you had better be a little respectful here, or you may be sent back to your master with a flea in your ear!"

"I wish to see your captain," said the lieutenant.

"You can't do it! You're an epaulet short of his rank, and can't shine!" said Doolittle, sarcastically.

"Then tell him that Sir Peter Parker wants to see him on board of the 'Bristol!'"

"Umph! I'll tell him; but it's my private opinion publicly expressed, young man, that if your Sir Peter had sore eyes, and seeing my captain on board of his vessel would cure them, he'd suffer a long time before they got well."

And with this, Mr. Doolittle went into the cabin.

"Your men are at quarters, as if they were ready for action, sir!" said the British officer to Morley.

"Yes, sir—it is a rule with the commander of this vessel to be prepared for every emergency!" replied Morley.

"Surely, he would not be so mad as to resist our fleet, if it was decided that he should be taken?"

"Yes, sir—mad enough to sink with his colors flying, before he would haul them down at the command of the minions of tyranny!" said Morley, proudly.

"Cap'n Seawaif sends his respects to Sir Peter Parker, and says, if that gentleman has a desire to see him, he can do so by coming on board of this vessel. And, moreover, Captain Seawaif will guaranty an honorable reception, hospitable treatment, and a safe return to Sir Peter, should he choose to visit the schooner!"

"Well—I've heard of impudence, but if this is not ahead of all record, may I never taste toddy again!" said the officer. "Do you know what reply I would make to such a messenger, were I Sir Peter Parker?"

"I neither know nor care!" said Doolittle, quietly.

"I'd reply with a broadside, and sink you at your anchors!" said the lieutenant.

"And feel as mean and sneaking afterward as a big lummux would, who'd struck a woman or licked a cripple!" said Doolittle.

The British officer made no reply, but passed over the side, entered his boat, and returned to the English flag-ship, whither we will follow him for a moment.

CHAPTER LV.

The majority of the English captains had counseled, upon the question being put to them, to seize, or, if she resisted, to sink the American schooner where she lay, even though it was in neutral waters and under the guns of a friendly fort. She had been recognized as the vessel which had done more damage to the royal cause than any other ten in the rebel service; and it seemed almost a necessity, as well as a point of honor, to destroy a foe so dangerous and full of mischief.

The commodore, in this case, was not with the majority. If he had been, he would not have called the council, but acted under the influence of his own imperious will and fiery disposition.

"I doubt the legality of the act!" said he. "Did I not, I would blow the bloody 'picaroon' out of water! But the colonies have got so strong through recent success, that their independence either is, or soon will be, recognized by all the great powers, and we must fight on *rules*, or else we'll get ourselves into a box we can't haul out of so easily."

The predominant "fire-eaters" were not disposed to consider the schooner in any light but that of a pirate, whom it would be next to God's service to destroy; but Sir Peter, who had done as old ZACHARY TAYLOR did—bless him! for he was my godfather in the baptism of blood—called a council to learn what his officers thought, not how he should act, determined to send a message to the schooner, and see what the commander would say in his presence.

And while the officer was gone upon that duty according to the custom not yet abolished in the British service—*experientia docet*—the jolly old commodore placed his spiritual stores at the service of his *confrères*.

Meanwhile, he paced up and down his quarter-deck, awaiting the reply which his lieutenant should bring.

When the latter reached the quarter-deck of the "Bristol," the commodore asked:

"Well, sir, what does the deuced Yankee have to say?"

"Sir Peter, his reply is so impudent, that I hesitate to repeat it!"

"If you could receive it, sir, it will not endanger you to deliver it," said Sir Peter, sternly.

"Well, sir, the long and the short of my report is, that Captain Seawaif, who would not receive me because I wore but *one* swab,* while he wore *two*, sent word to you, that if you wanted to see him, you must come on board of his schooner!"

"Well, that caps the climax of impudence!" said Sir Peter. "Yet, nevertheless, I'll go. I like the fellow's pluck, though it will bring him to the yard-arm, in the end!"

"I would advise you not to go, commodore!" said the lieutenant. "His men are at their quarters; but I will do him the justice to say, that he sent word that you should receive hospitable welcome, and be guaranteed a safe return."

"Have my barge manned; I will go on board and try his mettle!" said Sir Peter.

It was done; and, in a short time, in full uniform, the commodore was in his barge, and on his way to the schooner.

CHAPTER LVI.

When it was seen by Seawaif that the commodore was indeed coming in person to pay him a visit, he ordered his officers in uniform, to be prepared to receive him, and also bade his steward to prepare refreshments in the cabin.

His drummers and fifers were ordered to the gangway to receive the visitor with the "grand roll," and all was done to make the reception as proper as possible.

But Seawaif, determined to stand upon his republican dignity to the last, and not even to recognize the servant of a king as his equal, remained in his cabin, and deputed his officers to receive the commodore.

As the latter stepped on board the schooner, while the drummers "rolled off" and the guard of honor presented arms, he was received with raised chapeaux by Doolittle, Morley, and the doctor.

"Have I the honor of addressing Captain Seawaif?" said he, with a sarcastic politeness, as he bowed to Mr. Doolittle.

"No, sir—but if you'll walk into the cabin, he'll be glad to see you!"

The commodore's face flushed with anger, though he made no reply, but followed Doolittle to the cabin.

As he entered it, Seawaif, who was dressed in a neat and handsome uniform, rose to receive him.

"Good Heavens! Can the grave give up its dead?" cried the English noble, as he started back, while his face paled and his whole frame quivered with agitation. "Who are you, sir?"

"Edward Seawaif, commander of the American privateer 'Tyrannicide!'" said the young captain, utterly at a loss to account for the singular expression and agitation of his visitor.

"Resemblances are often accidental!" muttered Sir Peter, to himself. Then, in a louder tone he added: "You must excuse me, captain Seawaif, your looks reminded me of an old friend. But we'll not speak of that. I come on business. You sent me rather an impudent message; but I like your courage, even though you exhibit it in a bad cause; and I thought I'd humor you so far as to come on board!"

"You are very welcome as a visitor, if your purpose is friendly, sir!" said Seawaif. "Be seated, sir, and permit me to offer a glass of wine!"

"Thank you, sir! If you are as chivalrous in battle as you are polite under these circumstances, you are a very dangerous foe."

"Sir Peter is disposed to flattery!" said Seawaif, quietly. "Either in battle, or in any other position, I hope that I shall never forget the courtesy of a gentleman!"

After taking wine, the commodore said:

"The most unpleasant portion of my duty, Captain Seawaif, will be to ask, though in kindly words, the surrender of your vessel."

* Lieutenants in the British service, as they did in our navy until recently, wore but *one* "swab" or epaulet, while the captains wore one on each shoulder.

"The most pleasant part of my duty, Sir Peter, and it is also expressed in 'kind words,' will be to refuse to do so! This vessel is now in neutral waters. If you do not respect them, my men are at their quarters, and will fight her until she sinks! But if any one of your ships will give me a fair fight on blue water, I'll go to sea and meet her, and let Heaven decide the right!"

The old commodore seemed at first to be struck dumb with astonishment.

"Surely you are mad, sir!" he cried, at last. "The guns of my fleet would sink you in five minutes if fire was opened."

"Yes, sir—but if they did, retribution would follow. I have claimed the protection of neutrality from the fort."

"Blast it and its protection! I could silence its batteries in five minutes!"

"Perhaps, Sir Peter. But I should suppose the memory of Charleston would make you a little cautious about attacking forts!"

"There's a difference between a fort manned with skulking *Diegos*, and one occupied by American rebels, who fight with a rope around their necks!" said the commodore, paying an involuntary compliment to the rebels. "If I should decide to take you, I'd do it if you were under the guns of the Moro Castle, instead of this petty fort! But I will think of the matter. If you will surrender your vessel, I think that I can safely offer to you and your officers and crew a full pardon; and to you a rank as high in the British service as you now hold in your own."

"I am not aware of having merited this last insult, sir!" said Seawaif, coloring with anger. "No bribe can purchase me, nor can any threat intimidate! I will defend this vessel to the last gasp—so help me Heaven! and before she shall become your prize, I will put fire to her magazine with my own hand! If you will force me to final desperation, the blame be upon your own head. But all that I ask, and I repeat the challenge, sir, is a fair fight outside, and if any one vessel of your fleet can master me there, I will yield to her! Otherwise, I remain here in safety, or fight where I lie, as you may force me to do!"

"You are a brave young man! I respect, while I pity you for the obstinacy which will be your destruction!" said the commodore, as he took his leave.

CHAPTER LVII.

Seawaif attended his distinguished visitor to the gangway, where he was ushered to his boat with all the usual honors and ceremonies given to and received by officers of his rank in regular navies—music, presented arms, and six side-boys to pass the hand-ropes; and there our young commander parted with him, as courteously as if he had been a warm friend instead of a foe, yet with a dignity that completely won the heart of the aristocratic old nobleman and commodore.

"Leave the rebel cause, and you shall be a captain in our service!" he said, in a low tone, as he stood on the first round of the gangway ladder.

Seawaif smiled coldly, but made no reply.

"Morris is dead; and you might, if in His Majesty's service, yet hope to win a prize that you sought for at Bermuda!" continued the commodore.

"I will not affect to misunderstand you, sir; and will even believe, that zeal, rather than intention, causes you to insult me by such a proposition. Were I to act dishonorably, or prove a recreant to a cause, which my heart tells me is holy and just, *she*, and all true women, would scorn me—you, sir, who would tempt me to become a traitor, would detest me when I *had* become one!"

"On my soul, I believe I would!" said Sir Peter, who, even though involuntarily, could not but admire the stern integrity of the young American.

And he pressed the hand of Seawaif, as he went down the side into his boat, and bowed kindly after he had got there, though he did not speak again.

"What d'ye think will be the end of this matter, cap'n?" asked Mr. Doolittle, after the British commodore had left him.

"Fight?" said Seawaif abruptly. Then, as he turned to go into the cabin, he added: "Watch every signal, and every boat that leaves the flag ship, and report to me instantly any unusual sign or motion!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Ah, ha! more fight—more amputat! I

am much rejoice!" said the doctor, striding up and down the quarter-deck, and rubbing his hands together in glee. "Ah, Monsieur Doolittle, if in the fortune of war you should lose one arm or one leg, it will afford me more pleasure to amputate than you can imagine; because, my friend, it will be done with all precision and the beauty of science!"

"I'm eternally obliged to you, doctor; but I hope I'll lose my head first of all, and then you can amputate on the rest of me all that you like!"

"Eh bien! I shall dissect your stomach, zat I may observe how it is possible zat you digest so well ze beans, and ze pork, and molasses!"

And with this, the doctor went into the cabin, not waiting to observe the effect of this home-thrust at the lieutenant's gastronomic taste and habits.

Meanwhile, Mr. Morley, who had visited the commandant of the Spanish fort, returned to make his report. He informed Seawaif, that the commandant would be glad to afford the protection demanded, if he had the power; but with his small battery he could do nothing against such a force as the British exhibited. But if they fired upon him, he, the commandant, would certainly remonstrate with them; and if the schooner was destroyed or taken, the fact should most assuredly be reported to the home government.

"This is cold comfort, as the fellow said, who made his bed in a snow-drift; but we must endure what we cannot avoid. I presume we shall be attacked; if so, I shall defend the vessel so long as a man lives on board!" said Seawaif.

"And not an officer or man on board will shrink from the contest, no matter how great the odds—of that rest assured!" said the young officer.

"I know it—God bless them! I know it! Go on deck, and keep a look-out for the movements of the enemy; and call me upon observing anything remarkable!" said Seawaif, his tone and look evincing his intense feeling.

The officer hastened to obey, and Seawaif, taking down a chart of the Cuban coast, its harbors and bays, began to scan it carefully—perhaps with a thought thereby to aid himself in forming some plan to escape the great peril in which he found himself.

As he ran his eye over the tracings marking out the bay in which he then lay at anchor, his eye flashed with pleasure, as he glanced upon the winding-mark of a stream, laid out as "deep and narrow," which, by the chart, lay upon the opposite side of the harbor or bay from where he lay, on nearly a due southerly course, and not more than six miles distant.

After looking at the chart for a little while, he went upon deck, and taking a spy-glass, very carefully scanned the shore on the opposite side of the bay. So "blind" was the entrance of the "*Rio Canima*" marked on his chart, that he could not see a sign of it from his deck. But he had proved the chart elsewhere, and knew it to be true; and that, bearing south, three or four degrees west, lay the entrance, which, were he once within it, would enable him to lay his broadside to all comers, and to defend his little vessel to advantage against her monster opponents.

To get into that little river, therefore, was his only hope, if his enemies meditated an attack; for they had anchored in line, and so closely, that his escape to seaward would be a matter of impossibility, even in the darkness of the night, which was then rapidly approaching.

To know whether or not they did meditate an attack, was now most important to him. He was not left long in suspense on that point. After a delay of an hour or more, a boat was seen to leave the flag-ship, and to row toward the schooner. Very soon after, the commanders of the different vessels returned to their ships, thus showing that the council had adjourned.

An officer in the first-named boat brought to Seawaif a letter, of which the following is a copy:

"Young man, you are brave, courteous—and, in a bad cause, have already proved yourself a hero. And, although it is almost criminal in me to express admiration for a rebel, I cannot conceal, that I have seen enough of you to feel a deep interest in you, and to hope to have it in my power to save you and your brave men from utter destruction. This evening, my captains, without a dissenting voice, excepting only my own, voted to consider you a pirate, and destroy you as such, even though in the waters of a friendly nation. To have opposed this positively, would have

brought a suspicion of disloyalty upon myself, which would have been unmerited. I could, therefore, only insist upon a suspension of action until sun-rise tomorrow morning, to give you time for consideration; when, if you do not deem it best to surrender your vessel and crew unharmed, as they now are, it will be my painful duty to order my batteries opened upon her; and as she lies completely in our power, you know, as well as myself, what will be the result. For your own sake, promising my influence to secure you a free pardon, I entreat you to surrender. In humanity's name, I ask you to save your crew from a fate which they do not deserve; for brave men ought not to resist hopelessly or die mercilessly. Make no immediate reply, but think of my offer; and, if at sun rise your vessel is seen without her colors hoisted, we will consider it a surrender, and treat you with kindness and consideration as prisoners of war.

PETER PARKER,

Baronet and Commodore H. B. M. N."

A sarcastic smile flitted over the face of the young commander more than once while he read this letter; and he murmured: "Not so much in your power, Sir Peter, as you dream—but the time is important!"

"Tell your commodore, sir!" he said to the officer who had brought the letter, that I will consider upon its contents. Should I conclude to accept his conditions, he will know it by the sign he mentions—if not, tell him to take me if he can!"

The officer bowed, and would have retired at once, but Seawaif politely insisted upon his taking a glass of wine with him.

"It is hardly safe to take wine with Captain Seawaif!" said the officer, who had been one of those who slept under spiritual influence at Bermuda.

"When I entertain, it is, sir!" said Seawaif, smiling. "I will join you from the same bottle!"

The lieutenant was too much of a sailor to refuse a glass of grog, when he could take it with safety; and he did not hesitate to drink a friendly glass with the man, whom he might be fighting against in a few hours.

This done, bearing only a verbal message from Seawaif, and that one most calculated to disarm the commodore from any suspicions that he meant to escape—he returned to the flag-ship.

And by this time, the shades of evening were descending from the sun-deserted sky, and wrapping earth in their sombre mantles.

CHAPTER LVIII.

"Cap'n, you know curiosity isn't one of the concomitants of my nature, but if ever I did want to know one thing more than another, it is to know what them 'ere British mean to do!" said Mr. Doolittle, after the officer departed.

"They mean, if they find us here in the morning, to sink us, if we do not surrender!" said Seawaif, quietly.

"Do they now? Well, I'll be consarned if I'd let 'em either do the one or t'other! I'd go to sea if I was you!"

"What, through that line of ships, anchored so close, that they can hardly swing clear of each other, all across the channel?"

"That's so—we're in a pen, and hain't no chance for running!" said the lieutenant, with a sigh as deep as would have risen had he lost his dinner.

"You are a great hand for contrivances, Mr. Doolittle!" said Seawaif, with a smile; "can't you study out some plan to get us away from this peril?"

The lieutenant pondered quite a time before he made a reply. Then he shook his head, and said:

"I don't see nary a chance, cap'n! We may as well make our wills to-night, and fight till we go to kingdom come in the morning, for I'll turn tailor before I'll ever agree to surrender! I hain't got nary chick, or child, or poor relation to leave my prize-money to, and that's a bother! There *was* one!" the lieutenant paused to sigh, and to *re-cud-itate* from his tobacco-box—"there was one, if she hadn't g'n me the mitten, should have had it all—darn me if she shan't, at any rate! I'll make my will in favor of Kate Cringle, for she's the most blessedest gal that ever wore an apron since the time of Eve!"

The captain smiled, and said: "After you have made your will, Mr. Doolittle, I wish you to have the sweeps carefully muffled; all hands notified, in a low tone, that they are wanted for work; also, unshackle the chain, and fasten it with a nipper close to the hawse hole, so that it can be slipped without noise. Then rig a spar to be moored with an anchor, just the height of our signal lantern, and have it ready to fill our place when we move out of it!"

"Then you do mean to creep out, if you can, cap'n?"

"I mean to save my vessel; and I expect, in order to do it, to have my every order obeyed without any questions being asked!" said Seawaif, more sternly than before.

"Sartain—sartain—SARTAIN! I'll do my work first, and make my will afterwards!" said Doolittle.

And he proceeded forward to carry out the wishes of his commander, for darkness was now setting in.

It is astonishing how still and quietly men can work when they know that the success of some coveted measure, or the safety of life itself, depends upon silence and secrecy. How women, who are tongue-tie by nature, can get along in such a case, I do not know; for, through life, I've sailed but little in their company, and dread the danger of doing so more and more, the older I grow.

But to come to the point. Darkness had not overspread the earth more than a couple of hours, when, with a lantern left at the top of an anchored spar, the schooner was moved in silence from her anchorage; and when, at two bells—nine o'clock—the sentinels and look-outs in the fleet cried out "All's well," the "Tyrrannicide" was within four miles of the southern shore of Matanzas Bay, leading very nearly by compass for the mouth of the Canima River, and moving on quietly under the power of a dozen well-manned and muffled sweeps, while her commander had pulled ahead in a boat with lead and sounding-line, to find the entrance of the little river.

CHAPTER LIX.

It was morning. And the schooner was in a place of comparative safety—and ah! in such a place of beauty! Never will the writer forget the hour when first he saw it, and heard one of the fairest of Cuban señoritas tell how *los Americanos* had immortalized "La Camina del Flores" by their bravery against "Los tyranos Inglesas." But that yarn has no business here.

It was morning; and the schooner lay in a channel of clear, bluish, fresh water, scarcely her length in width, but many feet in depth. Above her, on either hand, towered rocky precipices three times her mast-head high, almost perpendicular, yet so covered with vines, and shrubs, and flowers, that scarce a rock could be seen, and the hill-sides looked like curtains of flowers, lowered down from heaven to hide the fugitives from tyranny from view.

Birds of varied and of gaudy plumage flew all around, and filled the air with melody.

The square-yards of the schooner had been braced sharp, so as to avoid touching the lofty shore, and now the schooner was laid with her broadside down the stream—a matter easy to do, for the current was very gentle. After dispatching a boat, with Mr. Morley in charge, to watch the movements of the British fleet, Seawaif bade his crew take rest until they were needed, for they had labored nearly all the night to place their vessel in that harbor of safety.

It was morning. And Sir Peter Parker, who could scarcely account for the deep, strange interest which he felt in the hero of this story—an interest which I hope is also felt by the reader—was at the dawn of day upon his quarter-deck, gazing toward the spot where he had last seen the schooner on the night before, but where, to his utter astonishment, she now was not.

Only a spar, with a dim lantern upon it, occupied the position which she had filled.

The officers and sentinels, who had been on watch during the night, were instantly called, and closely questioned; but all persisted that they had not heard a single sound during the night—not the rustle of a sail, the rattle of a chain or rope—not the creak of a block.

The schooner had disappeared in some way, as silently as if by magic. But whither she was gone was quite as much a mystery as how.

Signal was at once made for the captains of the fleet to reassemble in the cabin of the flagship. Soon all had arrived, and each reported that no sound or sign of a passing vessel had been heard on board of their ships.

"It is impossible that she could have slipped us all and gone to sea! The line of vessels was anchored so completely across the channel, that she could not have passed unseen, or at least unheard!" said the commodore.

"The deuced Yankees are more slippery than eels!" said one of the captains. "But I do not think it possible that she could have got to sea without treachery or absolute carelessness on the part of some of our look-outs!"

"Isn't there some nook or bay up the harbor in which she could, by dropping up with the tide, have hidden?" asked another old sea-fox.

"We will examine the chart!" said the commodore. "I have looked carefully with the glass over every inch of water in sight, and could see no sign of her—not a spar or sail in sight—nothing to show of her but the anchored spar and lantern!"

The chart of the harbor was brought, and soon the old "fox" just alluded to put his dumpy finger down on the spot marked out as "El Rio Canima."

"I'll bet a month's pay that she has crawled in there during the night. The soundings are deep, and it is just the place for a small craft to hide away in!"

"It will be easy to find out if she has or not!" said the commodore.

"Yes, sir—a confounded sight more easy than it will be to take her if the little river is too small for our ships to enter, as I judge from what is laid down in the chart!"

"If she is there, she *must* be taken!" said the commodore, sternly; and he at once ordered two armed boats to be sent with active and trusty officers to inspect the river, and see if the schooner had indeed found a harbor there.

The officer in command was instructed merely to reconnoitre, and not to endanger himself or men unnecessarily; but if he found that the vessel was there, to return at once and report the fact.

CHAPTER LX.

The boat in which Eugene Morley had been sent to the mouth of the narrow and beautiful river, that he might keep an eye upon the movements of the British fleet, had scarcely reached a spot whence he could see their vessels, when his eye caught sight of the two boats sent by Sir Peter Parker to reconnoitre.

He and his boat's crew were well armed, and had the advantage of being able to land and conceal themselves, had he so desired, but young Morley was not one of the hide-away class of men. He laid his boat across the mouth of the river, and waited the advance of the British boats.

"Buenos dias, señor!" said the officer in the leading boat, as it came within hailing distance.

"I am not a Spaniard; you can address me in your own language, and receive a reply in the same!" said Morley, calmly.

"Ah!—are you English?" asked the officer.

"No, sir—American!" replied Morley.

"Then, perhaps, you can tell me where the privateer lies, which left her anchorage in the bay last night."

"She lies where it will not be safe for any one to molest her!" said Morley, quietly.

"I should like to have you speak a little more definitely, sir!" said the officer. "I was sent to discover the whereabouts of the schooner, and do not intend to return until my duty has been performed to the letter! Is the schooner in this river?"

"It is for you to find out!" said Morley.

"That we will soon do!" said the officer, angrily. "I believe I should not exceed my duty, were I to take you and your boat in my charge; but as my orders do not extend so far, I refrain!"

"To refrain, when my consent to such a matter has not been given, is wisdom on your part. But to gain the knowledge you desire, you need go no further!" said Morley, who did not wish to have the officers know the position of the schooner, lest, if an attack was meditated by the boats of the squadron, it would benefit them to know how she lay. "The vessel you seek is in this river, and it would be policy, on the part of your master, to let her alone!"

"He is not in the habit of either asking or taking advice!" said the officer, haughtily.

"If your leader had known when he was well off, he would have surrendered when he could, without offering a resistance which, against such odds, will be useless! I advise him still to do it; for if blood is once shed, I doubt whether quarter will be given from our side!"

"It surely will not be solicited from ours!" said Morley.

And thus the boats separated; for no sooner

had the British started toward their vessels than Morley hastened to convey the information which he had gained to Seawaif.

"I expected little else!" said the American captain. "It is necessary to them that we should be extinguished; but it will give them more trouble than they are aware of. They *never* shall have the schooner;—for if the worst comes to the worst, I'll land my men, and blow her up!"

"If you will not think me impertinent, sir, I would like to offer you a suggestion," said Morley.

"Speak on, my dear boy—I have great confidence in your judgment."

"If you would permit, sir, I will take twelve or fifteen of our best shots, and station them at points well up among the cliffs, which I noticed as we came up; from which, though hidden themselves from view, they can pour in a very destructive fire on the enemy, as they ascend the channel in their boats."

"The idea is good, and we have more men than we need on board, for we can use only one battery. Pick out your men, and go ahead; but keep them and yourself out of danger as much as you can. The sound of your guns will warn me of the approach of the enemy!"

The preparations for a desperate defence on the part of the Americans was now made; and after all was ready on board, Mr. Doolittle was sent with two boats, to land Morley and his men at the designated points, and also to look out on the bay, and report the time and manner of approach of the enemy.

And now all was ready for action. And as the sun went up, the day, which had dawned with a fresh and fragrant air, began to be hot and stifling—so close that, though lying in that narrow channel between the hills, he could see but little of the sky, Seawaif predicted that a hurricane was at hand.

The doctor, while the preparations for action had been going on on deck, had been himself busy below, and he now came up with a smiling face and most contented air.

"Everying is prepare for ze amputat!" said he. "I shall desire zat we 'ave one grand combat wiz ze John-Bull mens zis time!"

Seawaif smiled quietly, and then a flash came over his countenance, as he heard first a signal gun, then rapid shots, and quickly following, volleys of musketry, but a short distance down the river.

The next moment Doolittle appeared with his boats, which were fastened on the up-river side of the schooner in a few seconds, and their crews transferred to her decks.

"They're a comin', cap'n—a whole squad o' boats; more'n I had time or a chance to count!"

"Very well, sir! We are ready for them! Run up our colors—we will receive them with all the honors!" replied Seawaif.

CHAPTER LXI.

The British boats approached in column, four abreast, very rapidly, until they reached the mouth of the river, where only two could row in side by side. Here they lay on their oars, and the commanding officer passed his final orders to each officer, and then bade his men to row on. They had not proceeded more than sixty or seventy yards, when the stroke oarsman gave a low groan, and dropping his oar, bounded up from his seat, and then fell back dead among the men. The sharp crack of a gun, and a puff of smoke from away up amid the thick bushes, in an overhanging cliff, told whence came that death. But it came not alone; for, in a moment more, shot after shot came pattering down, bringing death at every instant from the lofty coverts, though no man could be seen there, nor yet a single cry to intimate who or what was there.

Though the boats were thrown into great confusion, scattered volleys were fired from them up among the bushes; but, of course, at random, for no object for aim could be seen. But the continued fire from the bushes told with deadly effect upon the officers and men in the boats. Many of them had fallen, when the second in command—the first had been slain—shouted to his men to land and drive the rebels from their holes.

Ordering his coxswain to steer his boat in, its prow had barely touched the shore, when a huge rock, loosened from above, came tumbling with fearful force down the steep hill-side, plunging through the bottom of his boat, killing and maiming several men in its passage.

He had barely time to spring into another boat before his own sank; and he now gave

the order to push on up the stream, for there was death in delay; and he did not dare to retreat without having engaged the schooner.

They moved on as fast as they could, but ever and anon a white puff of smoke would belch out from the hill-side; and when it did, a man or officer was sure to fall.

But in a few moments they caught sight of the tall spars and gay colors of the schooner, and dashed on with a loud cheer.

On board the vessel, all now was still as death; but her guns frowning from their ports, the boarding-nettings tripped up—all told that she was ready.

There was a straight reach in the river of about two hundred yards, after turning a point which brought the schooner in sight; and up this, though they knew the race was in the very pathway of death, the boats were rowed by the unflinching crews, with all their strength.

Every gun was depressed on board the schooner so as to sweep that channel. Each piece was loaded almost to the muzzle, with grape, canister, and musket balls.

"It is a pity to murder brave men in the way I must!" murmured Seawaif. Then, willing to give them a chance to retreat, he shouted through his trumpet:

"Back, there! Back, for your lives!"

A scornful cheer rose from the lips of the British. For more than two-thirds of them, it was the last cry on earth. For, as Seawaif waved his hand to his gunners, with one lurid, blinding flash—one united, deafening roar, the whole battery opened, when the leading boats were not half pistol-shot away from them, making the very hills shake with the thundering echoes and the dreadful concussion.

"Load, and prepare to repel boarders!" shouted Seawaif; and then he and his men peered out into the night-like canopy of smoke upon the river, whence a few stifled shrieks and groans arose to tell that all were not dead among the enemy.

Then, though they could not be seen for the smoke, rallying cries could be heard from the British officers, and renewed cheers, as if reinforcements had come up; and soon, through the gloom, came the quick, sharp dash of oars again.

"Stand to your guns, men—don't raise a match till I give the word!" cried Seawaif.

A moment later, and the heads of several boats were seen in the smoke, close aboard.

"Fire!" shouted the American leader.

And again the earth, and air, and water trembled with the terrible shock—and then, but for a few wild shrieks, a few bubbling groans, a few sad cries of agony, all was still beneath that shroud of smoke—that canopy of death.

The crew of the schooner reloaded their battery quickly, without waiting for orders; but they had no occasion for another broadside. A few scattering shots, far down the river toward the bay, told that the survivors were in full retreat, and once more running the gauntlet of Morley's merciless battery marksmen.

The smoke slowly rose, and upon the water nothing could be seen but the wreck of boats, and here and there some wounded wretch clinging to a shattered plank, or else struggling by the shore, to grasp some bush or overhanging branch, to keep from sinking in the blood-ensanguined river.

"Ah! mon scalpel!—see zem mens wizout arms, and wizout legs. Do preserve zem for me, zat I may have ze pleasure of amputat!" cried La Motte, as he saw these maimed wretches. "Ah! mon cher capitaine, let me go quick—quick in one boat!"

Seawaif had scarcely bowed permission before the doctor had leaped into a boat, and, not waiting to have it fully manned, had pushed off to fish up subjects for amputation, and the practice of his surgical skill.

In a few seconds, he had picked up several; but as his boat lay alongside of the shore, under a huge cluster of broad-leaved vines and foliage, he was destined to be "picked up" in a way which terrified him almost to death; for a huge serpent of the constrictor species, dropping from amid the foliage, wound its immense coils around the doctor's lank body, and bringing its hideous head into close contact with his own, seemed, with his open mouth, about to swallow him *sans ceremonie*.

"Help!" shrieked the horror-stricken Frenchman. "I am keel wiz ze snake—help!—I am keel wiz ze snake!"

Though the men were also much terrified at this unexpected visitation, one or two of them

had sufficient presence of mind to use their sharp cutlasses in liberating the doctor from the hideous embrace; and in a few moments he was free, and the shiny reptile lay in pieces in the boat, or overboard. But the doctor was completely unmanned. He did not look for more subjects; but still almost fainting from his terror, begged the crew to row him back to the schooner, quickly.

"What is the matter, doctor?" asked Seawaif, who had seen the whole transaction from his deck.

"Ah! mon cher capitaine, nevere do I wish to go to ze shore in zis infernal country, any times more. Ze diable embrace me in ze shape of a snake, and almost shoke out my heart. Nevere I go to ze shore here any more!"

As no more British boats made their appearance now, Seawaif manned and armed four or five of his own, and pulled down the river, to see what had become of them.

When he arrived at its mouth, he discovered the shattered remnant of the expedition pulling back toward the vessels as fast as they could, for a terrible storm was gathering, such an one as, in the exposed bay where they lay, would be very apt to endanger the ships.

He knew that, even if it did not force them to weigh anchor and stand out to sea, it would at least prevent a renewal, for the time, of an attack upon his vessel. But he had little fear of this when he learned from Morley, when he took him and his sharpshooters aboard, that more than four-fifths of the attacking party had perished. And upon his own side, only one man of Morley's, who foolishly exposed himself, was killed, and two more were wounded.

On board, not a single soul had been hurt, and the doctor's had been the only casualty. His terror was so great that he had to take several strong glasses of brandy before, zealous as he was, he became sufficiently composed to attend to the wounded British who had been picked up in the schooner's boats.

Meantime, although no wind could be felt in that deep gorge between the hills, the black and driving clouds overhead, and the distant roar of the wind and surf upon the bay, told that the hurricane which Seawaif had looked for had come out in all its force.

"I reckon the Britishers will have their hands full all around!" said Mr. Doolittle, as he noticed this. "We've taken the starch out of 'em in here, and now they're going to catch Jeevie outside!"

"You can take a boat, sir, and watch if they go to sea!" said Seawaif. "If they do, we must watch our chance, and get into blue water too, for if they can be revenged for their loss of to-day, they will be, even if it costs them as many men as have already fallen!"

"Ay, ay, sir! Doctor, wouldn't you like to go along, and have another snake adventure?" said the lieutenant, as the doctor paused for a moment in an operation, and strengthened his nerves with another glass of brandy.

"Sare! Monsieur Doolittle, I consider zat you mean an insult, when you say *snake* to me! Be gar sare; if evere you so observe to me any more, I will catch one snake and make you eat heem! You onnerstand zat? Eh? If not, I will teach you annozzer lesson wiz my toad-stickare!" cried the doctor, almost wild with anger.

Mr. Doolittle did not care to excite him any more just then; so he had the boat manned, and started down the river, in obedience to the orders of Seawaif.

CHAPTER LXII.

Not two hours later than the time of the occurrences which concluded our last chapter, Mr. Doolittle returned with the news that the British fleet had weighed anchor or slipped their cables, and were standing out to sea, for the gale was most terrific in the bay, endangering everything within it.

Seawaif instantly ordered his light spars sent down from aloft—his guns, and everything on deck to be thoroughly secured; and then getting out his sweeps, moved slowly from the spot where he had made so gallant a defence, and where so many brave Britons had found a watery grave. It was nearly night when he arrived with the schooner at the mouth of the river. Not a sail of the British fleet was in sight; but far as the eye could see, all was wild and tumultuous with the force of the terrible storm. The bay was white with foam, and where the surf dashed upon the shore, or broke upon the rocks, it threw the misty spray more than mast-head high.

Seawaif saw that he could carry but scant sail, though he had the wind free for his course out of the harbor; so, after setting up preventer stays, and close furling and securing all the rest of the canvas with extra furling-lines, he hoisted his balance-reefed mainsail and fore storm staysail, and, with even so little canvas, shot out from under the land, like a white cloud driven athwart the sky, or a dove flying from the hawk.

Soon the ever-green shores of Cuba lay far away, fading to view, and the beautiful schooner was rising and falling, plunging and heaving upon the great blue, foam-crested waves of the Gulf Stream, heading away toward the northward and eastward, and free from all peril save that of the wind and wave.

"Sir Peter and all that are left of his crew will feel a deadly grudge against our craft after this, sir; for she has proved a bitter pill to them upon every occasion!" said Morley, as Seawaif stood by him, while the schooner sped along.

"She has, indeed. He would not be apt to have such merciful interest in me again if I were to get under his guns," said Seawaif. "Yet he ought to hold no grudge. We have only done our duty, as men and Americans."

"True, sir; but you cannot make them look upon us as other than rebels."

"The time will come, and that soon, when they must do so, and treat us according to the recognized rules of war among civilized nations. Had they done so in this instance, they would have been saved this last terrible lesson which we have been forced to give them."

"They deserved it all, sir. They have been utterly merciless to our people on shore burning villages, tortured prisoners, women and children slain by hired savages, attest that they merit no favor!"

"True!" said Seawaif; but he sighed at the thought.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Almost all of the coast of England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, can be called "rock-bound." Much of it is very wild and dangerous; its few harbors bad, and in stormy weather difficult of entrance. But in due time the good brig "Coraline" landed her precious "live freight"—or, in more select terms, deposited Miss Lizzie Egerton and Sir Humphrey Dorset and daughter in the port of Yarmouth, near which stood the castle which Sir Peter Parker called his home, when he was not upon the sea.

To this Miss Egerton, with her voyaging companions, was soon conveyed, in a lumbering old family coach, that in looks seemed to date from "the year one;" for though Sir Humphrey was intending to return to his own deeply-mortgaged estate in Hampshire, he could not refuse to spend a few weeks at "Egerton Castle," especially as Venona had promised and was determined to share Lizzie's imprisonment there; for both considered a residence in such a gloomy place, and such a lonely old pile, as little less than an imprisonment.

Perhaps a second reason for Sir Humphrey's being very willing to endure a short residence in the castle was, the information that in it were vast stores of wines and liquors, which Sir Peter had collected in his different cruises to various parts of the world. True, he was told that there was no one there to drink it with him—for it was not likely that he, a Hampshire baronet, should associate with a morose agent, a deaf old butler, or any of the retainers.

But he could "play a lone hand" over a good bottle, if no company was convenient—for he had learned to do that at Bermuda. The shooting around the castle was represented as being fine; so that he made up his mind to have a regular good time, and enjoy it without grumbling.

It was a huge, unshapely, but grand old pile; full of rough towers, walled in, even though it stood upon a rocky and almost inaccessible hill, up which, except by the excavated roadway, scarce a goat could have clambered. But once there, the view from it was splendid.

On the front, the eye could scan the boundless space of restless ocean; look far away where the distant sail seemed but a snowy speck upon the blue rim of the horizon—or down at the very foot of the cliff, where the great waves, with loud and constant roar, dashed angrily against the rocky boundary, which refused to let them pass.

Back from the sea, the eye ranged over a

wild and rude expanse of hill and dale, of forest and moorland, with only here and there some peasant's hut to show a sign of human life. But there were deer, and cattle, and goats, and sheep in plenty there; and the whirr of the black-cock and the ruffled grouse often fell upon the ear.

Lizzie had been received at the port by the agent of Sir Peter Parker, to whom she bore letters of instruction from the commodore, and who came down in and rode back on, the box of the family carriage.

His name was Wood—*Simon Wood*—and he had been engaged in many callings—more, probably, than he had chosen to inform his employer of, or chose to have generally known to the few whom he condescended to associate with in any degree. *Few*, I say, for he was taciturn to suaveness—almost morose—and very seldom mixed with any company, except when business called him. His age was somewhere between forty and fifty—that or more—to judge from his appearance. His features, rather sharp and thin; his eye, keen, black, and piercing; his expression, generally very quiet and sober. But there was a something hypocritical—a kind of half sarcasm—in his soberness, which did not strike a stranger agreeably.

He was well educated; it was supposed from his manners, well born—perhaps a younger son in some titled family; for it was known to the commodore that he did not use his real name. He had been connected with the church, as curate or pastor, in his younger days; but, for some reason, had changed the clerical vocation for that of a soldier; and he was in the humble capacity of a private of marines when Sir Peter first discovered him and took an interest in him, in consequence of his education and talent. He had procured his discharge, and made him agent of his estates, some four or five years previous to the time when we introduce him to the notice of our readers.

Lizzie gave this man the letters of Sir Peter when he first came on board the transport, in obedience to the messenger whom she sent for means to remove herself, friends, and baggage to the castle, and she could not but notice the changes in his countenance while he perused them.

"The wishes of Sir Peter shall be strictly followed!" said he, after he had perused the letters, and placed them in his pocket.

Lizzie now mentioned, without formally introducing them, that Sir Humphrey Dorset and his daughter would remain with her, as guests, at the castle, for a time.

"The guests of Miss Egerton shall receive every attention in my power and province to yield," said the agent, with cold politeness; and after having given the necessary orders in regard to the baggage, he begged leave to escort the party to the coach.

In a short time, the ladies and the baronet were located, as comfortably as could be, in the old castle; and the butler, instructed by Lizzie, had waited upon the baronet, to ask what kind of wine he preferred at dinner.

The butler, as we have before hinted, was rather deaf; but, by his color and proportions, he gave evidence that he not only knew what good eating and drinking was, but probably improved his knowledge by pretty constant practice.

The baronet saw this, and felt a sympathetic liking for the butler at once; and to ingratiate himself in his favor, made a deposit of a golden guinea in the fat palm which had held up many a dusty bottle.

"So your young mistress wants you to find out what kind of wine I like best?" said the baronet, rather loudly—for he had been informed of the physical failing of the butler.

The latter nodded his head, to imply an affirmative answer.

"Well, let me see. I like claret, in its place, if it has body. Champagne goes well with soup and fish—sherry and Madeira afterwards—and port on the top of that. I like all kinds of good wine; and can endure a very little good brandy or mountain dew, before meal-time, to give me an appetite. Do you understand me?"

The butler nodded, sagaciously, that he did. "A little brandy now, as an appetiser, wouldn't offend my delicacy in the least," continued the baronet; "and then, that I may best judge of the variety and quality of the wines you have in store, you may set a bottle of each kind that you have to cool for me, and I will try them at dinner!"

The butler nodded again, affirmatively, and smiled.

The baronet, even if he noticed, did not understand the foundation of that smile. He would, however, had he been aware that there were over forty varieties of wine in Sir Peter's wine cellar.

The butler now withdrew, but soon returned, bearing a tray, upon which stood a bottle of choice old cogniac, another of rum, another of hollands, and a fourth of East India arrack. Water and sugar were also beside these; and the good baronet felt as if he should not suffer, even if the old castle was gloomy, and no one there to join him over his bottle.

He tasted of the brandy, smelt of the other liquids, and pronounced them good, while with the first he proceeded to encourage his appetite.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Though there were many romantic drives and beautiful walks in the vicinity of Egerton Castle, and occasionally both were enjoyed by Lizzie and Venona, their favorite spot was a rude and lofty tower which overlooked the sea, standing in truth upon the outer verge of the rocky cliff which formed the seaward-side of the castle. Here it was their pleasure to sit for hours, and gazing out upon the waters, to talk of those who made their home upon the ocean, those to whom they had given their young hearts in keeping. Lizzie had caused the room to be fitted up comfortably as a sitting-room and study, and here they had numerous maps and charts, as well as a pair of excellent telescopes; and while, at one time, they would amuse themselves by looking at every sail in sight, from the far-off and sluggish merchantman off the coast, to the fishing shallop close in shore, or at anchor in the little port near by, at another they would examine every isle, and channel, and harbor, laid down in the chart of the American coast, and wonder where then could be those who most occupied their thoughts. In this occupation consisted their greatest happiness, for they never saw any company except the baronet, and seldom saw him, except at dinner-time; for when not enjoying his meals, and the accompaniments, he was away with the agent, who for one that eschewed the bottle altogether, had won strangely upon his favor. Perhaps it was because he was fond of angling and hunting, and knew well the haunts of game around; for Sir Humphrey was passionately attached to such sports, more so than is usual with men of plethoric habit, and Mr. Wood was very attentive in showing them to him. The agent had learned the baronet's peculiarities very easily, and by managing in their various excursions to always have a choice bottle of wine or liquor, and a lunch introduced opportunely, had completely won the baronet's heart, even though he could not, or would not, toss off bumpers with him—his health being a plea to avoid it.

But there was another, whose keen eye catching many a wild and passionate glance from him, when he did not think her so observant, who saw that Mr. Simon Wood sought to win the favor of Sir Humphrey Dorset with the view of endeavoring to win a greater prize than that—for whenever the agent could manage to make an excuse to appear in the presence of Venona, he did so—and if there lay in his power any service, howsoever great or small, which he could render her, he did it with an eagerness only out-done by his courtly grace.

Venona saw this, and not unlike many mother of her sex, who dislikes most the one who has dared to love her, she hated the very sight of the agent. And although not naturally haughty to those who were in a position inferior to that which she occupied, to him she was as cold as even a queen to the lowest serf in her dominions.

And she knew that he saw and felt it, for at times a wild, revengeful light would flash from his eyes, which spoke to her of danger.

Yet noting so much as she had, in that one thing she had not made a confidant of Lizzie. Why she had not, is beyond our ken. Perhaps she deemed it folly, even in herself, to believe that he, late a private marine in H. B. M. S., more than twice her age, and only now an agent on the estate of a baronet, would dare to love her. At any rate, all that she knew in the matter she kept to herself—only, when occasion served, giving him looks of scorn for his imploring glances.

And what this was to lead to, is yet beyond our ken also. Only this have we to say, that

once in a while, when after some necessary or made-up errand had taken him into her presence, he would retire with a fiery flush on his usually pale cheek, muttering: "This will not last long—my turn will come yet, proud lady!"

CHAPTER LXV.

"He has been very long absent, father—very long; I wish he would come in once again before I die!"

Can it be our once sweet, blooming, dear Kate Cringle, who lies there so pale, her couch moved up by the window, so that she may look out upon the harbor? Can it be her who in such a faint voice utters those words? It is, and she is *very* thin and pale! Oh, how quickly do the sorrows of the heart eat up the strength of the body!

Mr. Cringle himself looks ill and very unhappy. He is worn down with anxiety; for what to him would be all his wealth—where would be his ambition, if his dear Kate perished before his eyes. She was his *only* heart's treasure. He was, and ever had been, one who regarded wealth more as a convenience than a necessity—had gathered it without toil, used it without meanness, and dispensed charity where he saw it was needed.

All this was *human*; but now in the yearning agony of his soul he asked something superhuman—he asked the ALMIGHTY to check the ebbing of the tide of life in his loved and beautiful daughter. He could see his wealth melted away—could with his own hands toss it into the sea—but he could not lose *her*, his Kate, his darling, and his more than life!

"Can you see no vessel, father? No white spot upon the dark sea-board that will warm my heart a while before it walks the winter-path of death?" she murmured.

"There's a stir about the flag-staff of the lookout," said he, forgetting the *et-cet-er-a*, as he had done under the excitement of his latter days. "There's a stir here—something *may* be coming in!"

At that moment, a basket of fruit and flowers was brought in by a little boy; and that it was not the first visit of the child may be inferred from her words:

"He is here again! Who sends to me those sweet flowers, those fruits, which tell me that even while I am dying, I leave some thoughts about me not perishable—who?"

A gun at that instant fired from the lookout station, attracted the attention of both the merchant and his daughter. An instant later, when they looked for the bearer of the fruits and flowers, he was gone.

"What is the signal, my father?" asked poor Kate.

"A single vessel coming in—an American!" he replied.

"No private signal, father?"

"Not yet, child. Ah, yes, there is one going up now—do not hold your breath so, or feel anxious, I will tell you what it is the moment it unfolds!"

"Oh, be quick, father, I feel faint—this is not death, is it? I feel as if I *must* sleep!"

"And the long fingers dropped from her eyelids down upon her pale cheek, and she seemed indeed to be sinking into that sleep which knows no earthly waking.

"Cheer up, cheer up!" cried the merchant. "The private signal flutters out, and tells me that it is the schooner!"

"Wake me when he comes!" she sighed—and seemed to sink away in a pleasant dream, for her face was wreathed by a smile, and low, soft breaths came up through her pale lips.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Seawail was surprised after having come to an anchor, furling sails, and landed, that he was not met at the wharf as usual by Mr. Cringle, and he asked of the first person whom he met, which happened to be Moses Gelson, where the merchant was?

"Attending by the bed-side of his angel child, young sir!" said the miser—who in many things had decidedly improved since first we saw him. "And I think you will be the best doctor there, young man. Be kind to her; she is an angel, just as her mother was—be kind to her, and I'll not forget you—I'll not forget you?"

Seawail would have asked more questions, but a crowd was gathering around, perchance expecting news, and he hurried away from them—for he had no news to give which affected him half so much as that which he had received. Not that he loved Kate, but that he knew and felt that she loved *him*—and who,

who that has a spark of manhood in his breast can know that he is loved and not feel, even if he cannot return love for love, a responsive thrill toward that heart which throbs for him?

In a few moments, his rapid steps had taken him to the store, and a glance, rather than a word from a clerk there, told him that Mr. Cringle was up stairs.

Quickly he went up, and stood in the room, where he had first met, last parted with her.

And his own cheek grew pale, his own heart trembled, when he saw her white face—the dark hair lying tangled about the snowy brow, for he thought she was dead.

"Kate—poor Kate!" he murmured.

"Come—come at last!" she cried, and half arose from her couch, extending her arms as if to greet him, and while new beauty for an instant gave life and color to her face, she gazed at him with her dark, soulful eyes, and then sunk back as white and still upon the couch as if she were dead, indeed.

The merchant could not speak. He extended his hand to Seawaif, but choking sobs prevented his saying a word.

Low and very sweet her voice came up from her white lips, as she said:

"Don't weep, my father—I am happy now!"

And she reached a thin, white hand out to the young captain; and while he pressed it in his own rude, warm, and true palm, he wept; but she smiled, and went to sleep again—for her strength was gone almost utterly.

But her slumber was easy, like that of an infant—not wild, dreamy and oppressive as it had been before; and when, soon after, the physician came and felt her pulse, he looked astonished, and said that "a favorable change was taking place, but that by no means must she be awakened!"

And there they sat, the merchant and his captain, and not a word was spoken, or a question asked about the result of the cruise, or its incidents. A matter of more importance lay before them—a soul was pausing upon eternity's dark verge, and a breath might blow it off.

CHAPTER LXVII.

A few days, when one is lingering between the confines of Life and Death, often bring about a great change. It was so in the case of Kate Cringle. While the "Tyrannicide" was being fitted up for another cruise, Seawaif was a frequent visitor to her side; and though from his lips no word passed which a brother might not have uttered, and no act of his could be construed into meaning more than a fraternal care and feeling, she improved in looks and health each day.

And Mr. Cringle was so overjoyed at this, that he began to remember his *et-cet-c-ras*. In one thing, however, he was very dilatory. He exhibited no haste to prepare the schooner for her next cruise. When an article was asked for, by Seawaif or his executive officer, it was furnished; but there was not the usual bustle with the merchant—the usual anxiety to furnish everything, and get the vessel ready for sea.

If indeed she had been pronounced unseaworthy and condemned, to judge from his actions, Phineas Cringle would not have fretted very much, nor have been in great haste to build another. Not that his patriotism was less than it had been, but because he saw that Kate's health improved daily, while Seawaif was near her.

She seemed to cling to life while he was present, and to endeavor to rally, while, when he was absent, she did not aid Nature by an effort.

How strangely it is that all souls which are delicate pine in their nature—all spirits which are sensitive to the passion of love, are so closely linked to the physical nature, that if the heart aches, or the soul suffers, the body droops and fails at once!

Kate had so far recovered, that she was able to sit up by her favorite window and look out upon the harbor. Though she had not strength to raise the spy-glass to her eye, by resting it across the window-sill, she could bring it to bear upon the schooner, and watch the daily preparations for sea; such as fitting and bending new sails, scraping and slushing down the upper spars and booms—getting in water, wood, and provisions.

"You will soon be ready to depart again!" said she to Seawaif, one day. "I see that they have finished taking in wood, water, and provisions on board!"

"Yes, we are nearly ready for sea!" replied Seawaif.

"I wish this cruel war were over—then you

would not have to go to sea again!" she said, in such a quiet child-like tone, that Seawaif smiled as he answered:

"Oh, yes—when the war is over, I shall still be a child of the sea! I have no other profession!"

"A child of the sea!" she murmured. "I wish that I too were one, and not a weak, helpless girl. Can you not take me with you? I think I should get better there; and if I died, why you could put me in the water, and I would go down among the mermaids in their coral caves, and ask them for a home!"

"Rather say, up to heaven among your sister angels!" said Seawaif, enthusiastically.

He could not help it. She looked so beautiful in her transparent pallor—in the unearthly brightness of her eyes; and when he spoke to her, a gradual pinky flush, a soft and rosy tint came out not only upon her lily cheek, but all over her face, such as the sun gives to any flower just opening to its breath.

"I am not an angel—they are immortal; alas, I am mortal!" she answered. "Subject to mortal pains—to mortal passions—I cannot make eternal spring, nor yet a winter of my heart, for one or other must be done 'ere we can find contentment here!"

Why, why is it that beauty, intellect, everything brightens in those who approach Death's dark land before their time? The aged sink in blindness, deafness, palsied to the grave—but the young go, growing more and more beautiful until they disappear—even as a lamp flames brightest just before it goes out.

"When will you go?" asked Kate, after a long pause, for her strange words had sunk too deep in Seawaif's heart to make him talkative.

"We will be ready to go to-morrow!" he said. "But perhaps we will not go so soon!"

"Yes—you will go to-morrow—you must!" she said. "Far across the waters there is a spirit far more hopeful than mine, and yet 'tis doomed to disappointment! Go Edward—go—I shall wait on earth till you come back!"

He looked wildly upon her face to learn what knowledge she could have of another, "far across the waters;" but her eyes were closed, and she seemed to be speaking in a trance; for, when he spoke to her, and asked her what she meant, she made no reply, but seemed to have fallen gently asleep, as she often did.

With a troubled heart he gently kissed her pale brow, and went away.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

"Ready for sea, *et-cet-c-ras*? All ready?" asked Mr. Cringle, on the morning succeeding the evening which closed our last chapter.

"Yes, sir," replied Seawaif. "Everything that is needed is on board, and the crew impatient for service."

"Then I suppose you must go?" said the merchant, slowly, and with a sigh.

"Does Kate know that you are going so soon?" asked the merchant, after a pause.

"She knows that I am ready for sea," replied the young captain. Then he asked: "Have you ever told her that my thoughts had rested upon another lady, Mr. Cringle?"

"If No, sir! It would have killed her, had such news come from my lips; and I—I love my child too well to murder her! Why did you ask me that?"

"Nothing caused the question but a fear that such a suspicion might have found a place in her heart through some unguarded word."

"No such word or hint has passed my lips. But if you are going to sea to-day, you had better tell her. Do it gently—very gently—for her life hangs upon a tender thread."

"I will speak as I ever do—kindly, as a brother should unto a sister," said Seawaif; and he warmly pressed the hand which Mr. Cringle had extended to him, and then went to see Kate.

A calm and lovely smile was on her face when he entered the room where she had lain so long an invalid, and she looked as if Life had resumed courage, and driven back Death from its portals.

"You have come to say good-bye!" she said, so cheerfully that he was astonished, and without speaking, only bowed an affirmative reply.

"Do you believe in dreams?" she asked; and a radiant smile overspread her face.

"In dreams, Kate?" he asked.

"Yes, in dreams! I did not, once; but I do now. An angel has come to me of late so often, in my dreams, and worked so hard, that it has dug up the roots of sorrow which I, in

my folly, had planted there, and planted Hope where they existed."

"An angel in dreams—may it bless you while I am gone, for I am going away again."

"I knew it!" she answered; "you go to gain fame; but where your heart yearns most for success, disappointment will meet it. Edward, I shall live now, for you will come to me again—you will come, with a sad heart, and say you cannot live without me."

"It may be so," he said; "and if I come, I know you will speak kindly to me."

"My heart and soul are yours. But go—go quickly, while I am strong!" she said.

And he felt that it was better to do so: and he kissed her, and hastened away.

Two hours later, and the schooner breasted the waves of the Atlantic.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Venona Dorset was a dreamy girl at times, and loved—oh, so much!—to wander away off from company—even from her almost constant companion, Lizzie Egerton—and to visit the wild, dark dells, where sparkling, noisy streamlets rushed, and where Nature dwelt in her beautiful rudeness. And there were many such lovely spots near Egerton Castle, where gray rocks, covered with moss, rose ruggedly and stern from the earth, seeming to give even a cold welcome to the glimpses of sunlight which came "a-visiting" down between the branches of the weeping ash.

One day she had started from the castle with Lizzie and her own father, and the three had wandered a long way—for it was a bright sunny day, and the cool shades of the forest were delightful. By direction, a lunch had been brought to them, but Venona wandered on while the baronet and Lizzie stayed to pay attention to it. She had not gone more than a hundred yards or so, before she came to a clear, grassy pool, formed in a little, shady nook by a descending rivulet—so beautiful, that she paused and sat down on the mossy bank, and amused herself by casting little pebbles into it, that she might watch the glittering ripples that they made.

Over her head was a profusion of green branches and vines, and around her were many wild flowers, raising their bright heads up from among the rocks, as if they were looking to see what she—herself so beautiful—was doing there.

And lulled by the gentle rustle of the leaves above, and by the murmur of the waters below, she ceased, gradually, to throw pebbles into the pool—her white hands sunk carelessly down upon the moss—her bonnet, having been untied, fell from her head, and leaning back against the flowery bank, she fell off into a gentle slumber.

To her it seemed that she scarcely had slept, for the rustle of the leaves—the silvery gushing of the waters—were sounding plain in her ears, when suddenly she felt something as hot as fire upon her lips: it did not seem like a kiss, but like a festering blister—but strong arms were clasped fiercely around her, and she knew that she was in terrible danger. She awoke—but her eyes were so blinded by terror that she could see nothing; she felt that she had been partially raised from the ground, and while scream after scream broke from her lips, had been dropped again, and she had a dim glimpse of some one rushing from her into the thick bushes close at hand, but could not tell who it was. Yet her frightened heart knew. Had it not told her, a paper dropped accidentally near her feet did; for she took it up, examined it, and put it away in her bosom, for use thereafter. It was a rent account upon the estate of Sir Peter Parker, and had no business in the hands of any one but his agent.

But a few moments had elapsed after she had uttered the shrill screams caused by her terrible affright, when Venona heard the sound of rapid footsteps coming; and in a moment Lizzie Egerton, brave and fearless, rushed to her side—at first almost breathless—to ask what was the matter.

O Woman—Woman! How you can dissimulate!

The first word which Venona uttered was one of dissimulation.

"Dear Lizzie, what a foolish creature I am!" she said. "You heard me scream, didn't you?"

"Yes. What was the matter? I thought you were in some fearful peril!"

"Wh—wha—what's the matter, blossom?" cried Sir Humphrey, coming up at this in-

stant, puffing and blowing like a porpoise bound for a harbor with a gale of wind close astern of him.

"Why, I've been very much frightened by—by a dream! I fell asleep here, and dreamed that—a snake, or something of the kind, had coiled itself around me, and I screamed right out, and woke myself, as well as alarmed you."

"Yes—scared me so that I dropped and broke my bottle of sherry before I had drank half of it!" said the baronet, sorrowfully. "I thought that something *was* the matter."

"Your terror lasts a long while for a mere dream," said Lizzie, looking at her closely. "You are as white as a lily, and tremble yet from head to foot."

"Wake you from a deep slumber in a terrible dream, and you will also tremble, sweet coz!" said Venona. "I am equal to any danger of which I know and can see; but a dream may terrify those who possess the strongest nerves."

"Dreams do not leave the mark of violent hands!" said Lizzie, in a whisper; and she glanced down to where the distinct marks of fingers remained upon the white shoulders of her lovely friend.

"Hush! Do not let my father hear you, or see the sign. I will explain my suspicions—my almost certainty—after we get to the castle," said Venona, also in a whisper.

And she drew her scarf up over her shoulders, and rose to her feet, saying that she was ready to return.

"My lunch is spoiled—I broke my bottle of wine," said the baronet, sadly.

"Perhaps my flask will partially supply your loss, Sir Humphrey!" said the agent, Simon Wood, coming that moment in view, with a gun upon his shoulder and a well-filled game-bag by his side, and at the same time extending a flask which the baronet had seen before very often.

"Thank you, Mr. Wood—thank you. You are the strangest man I ever knew: always near when you are wanted!" said the baronet.

"And sometimes when he is *not* wanted!" said Venona, in a tone which did not reach her father's ear, for he was just then busy with the flask; but the agent *did* hear her, as she intended that he should.

"We will go back to the castle," said Lizzie, with rather more than her usual dignity. "It will not do for us to wander far away from the castle, it seems!"

"What is the matter, Miss Egerton? Has anything occurred to render your usual rambles disagreeable?" asked Mr. Wood.

"No, sir—not particularly. But have you heard no unusual noise, in your excursion recently? Nothing which should draw you near our party?"

"Indeed, I have not, Miss Egerton!"

"Then, sir, I am glad to congratulate you!"

"Me, Miss Egerton? I do not understand you now, surely; for I do not know of any good fortune which I, but a poor agent of your uncle's, could have received which requires congratulation."

"I congratulate you upon your lack of hearing, sir! If you desire further information, you will call at my room after I have returned to the castle."

And Lizzie, looking him full in the eyes, so expressed herself in a single glance that he understood her, and he turned away confused—and, for the time, unmanned.

Sir Humphrey, having very nearly emptied the flask, would have returned it to Mr. Wood, but that gentleman had vanished almost as suddenly as he had appeared—and, therefore, the baronet *quite* emptied it, and placed it, as a vessel which yet might become useful, in his coat pocket.

And the trio returned to the castle; for the adventures of the morning had rendered a longer stay outside unpleasant.

CHAPTER LXX.

The sun was dropping well down toward the western verge of the sea-lined horizon; and the young ladies having dined and left Sir Humphrey with his wine, had almost completely recovered their nerves, and forgotten the rather startling events of the morning, narrated in our last chapter.

With her glass to her eye, Lizzie was, as usual, sweeping the expanse of sea open to her vision, while Venona, occupied seemingly in thought, was sitting in a corner of the tower, looking listlessly away among the golden and purple clouds which had gathered to escort the sun down to his bed.

"What are you thinking of, Venona?" asked Lizzie.

"Nothing in particular—everything in general, dear coz. What a glorious sunset 'tis going to be!"

"Yes; but does it not, in its redness, betoken a coming storm? See how the fleet of fishermen are all scudding in to find a harbor. So red a sun-to-night betokens a dark day for the morrow."

"Indeed? Well, as you are a commodore's niece, Lizzie, you *should* know all about the weather! And the more that you have a full-blooded captain for a lover!" said Venona, laughing.

"Ah, Venona, why should you taunt me?—you who are so in love with Morley that you'd give now two of your unjeweled fingers to know what I've been looking at for the last twenty minutes!"

"What, dear Lizzie—WHAT? Is there a strange sail in the offing?" And Venona hurried from her seat to Lizzie's side, and put one of her white, round arms about her neck, and did that which I so dislike to be a witness to—*kissed her!*

"Yes, my dreamy little coz—yes, there is a strange sail in the offing, and she is growing very rapidly. I wish we had an hour or two more of daylight, to help us to find out who and what she was. She spreads a good deal of canvas, for she has a fair wind for our port, and must, therefore, be steering for it. Her sails, too, are very white, as if bleached by service. But she is so far off that I yet cannot see a speck of her hull, nor can I make out her rig."

"Ah, what a pity! And the sun is going down?"

"Yes, in a field of blood. We will have a terrible gale by to-morrow, or perchance before. I hope, if this stranger is bound in, whoever he is, he will have a pilot; for it will be dark before he is off the harbor, and in a gale, ours is a coast much to be dreaded."

"Why couldn't a boat with a pilot be sent off, while it is yet light, to meet them?"

"It could," said Lizzie, "but it would seem so strange for me to order such a thing; and it would be so dangerous, too, if the strange sail should be the schooner, that I dare not risk it."

"More dangerous to *them* should they risk a near approach to the coast, or attempt to enter our harbor *without* a pilot!" said Venona.

"That is so!" said Lizzie. "They shall have a pilot. I wish that I were at the port, or could get there unseen. Let me think: I can send Jennie, the butler's daughter, down, as I sometimes do, upon an errand. She is a girl of sense, and will do what I bid her do, without asking unnecessary questions."

"Then do send her, dear Lizzie. Something whispers in my heart that Seawail and Morley are near—are in that vessel which is speeding toward us on the wild wings of the wind!"

"Perhaps so. Let us go down. I will send the girl away immediately," said Lizzie. And they left the tower.

Scarcely had they done so, when, from behind an angle outside, a head appeared before the window which opened inland, and a body followed—which, a moment later, crept in over the balustrade.

The spy was none other than Mr. Simon Wood.

"So they have *lovers!*" he muttered. "I now begin to *understand* the instructions of Sir Peter; and Miss Lizzie Egerton shall have the benefit of them. *Morley and Seawail* are their names. And a pilot is to be sent off! I will see to that myself. The little lady need not trouble herself to send Jennie: for I want these gallants to enter our harbor once, and I'll warrant they'll stay there—or their vessel will for a time! They shall be *very* welcome!" And the eyes of the agent flashed with new fire, as he passed stealthily on in the course which the young ladies had taken.

But, wonder upon wonder! scarcely had he left the tower, when another head appeared from a second window close beside the one through which he had entered. And it was a fresh, fair head—not such a pale, sharp-featured, rascally-looking *caput* as his.

It was the head—ruddy and healthy, and far from uncomely—of a girl of eighteen or twenty years of age. Her red hair, blue eyes, rosy cheeks, and plump figure, gave token that there was life and love in her; and even if, in her soliloquy, she had not named herself,

her likeness to *him* would have told us that she was the butler's daughter.

"So, Mr. Simon Wood, I *know* what you're after now! You made love to *me* till something that looked better came in your way; and now, on the track of fresh game, you think you'll run a safe and sure scent! You'll run off it, as sure as my name is Jennie! Miss Venona hates you; so do I—now that I know you. She loves somebody else, and so does Miss Lizzie; and they're expected in a vessel; and the vessel which Miss Lizzie saw may be the one. She will want a pilot. She shall have one, and not a soul in this castle shall be the wiser. She shall have one who will place her, not in Yarmouth, but somewhere where she can be twice as safe—and Mr. Simon Wood be none the wiser of her whereabouts!"

And Miss Jennie Rollison, the butler's daughter, having said thus much to herself—not knowing, reader, that we were listeners—disappeared in the gathering twilight, following the same course which had first been taken by the young ladies, and next by Simon Wood, the spy, whom she had herself put under surveillance.

CHAPTER LXXI.

There were two inns in the town of Yarmouth. One carried the sign of the "Herrings"—being as many fishes as could be painted on a board three feet square. The other was the "Jolly Tar;" and had upon its sign a picture of a sailor ashore, scattering gold pieces on the ground, which a lot of not over-dressed little human angels were picking up.

In the tap-room of the latter, about one hour or so after the sun had gone down, there were, probably, full twenty individuals, most of them fishermen, and mostly sitting with a tankard of beer before them, at the long table, and with a pipe in their mouths.

"It be like to storm rough, out to-night, Jack," said one of the oldest of these men, to a young, smart-looking fellow, who sat near him.

"Yes, Haddock. It'll blow great guns afore morning. I reckon all the boats be in—if they're not, they ought to be; and 'll wish they were afore day breaks on 'em. The smoke, this mornin', didn't raise a hand's-breadth above the chimneys; but snaked right out toward the ground; and the sun came up slow and dullish red—as if it didn't want to. We'll have a power o' rain before it shows its face again!" said the young fisherman.

And, as if to prove the soundness of his judgment, the wail of the rising gale began to make itself heard about the old inn. Its heavy sign creaked out opposition to the "Herrings" across the way; and each window seemed to have a peculiar ague of its own—for it shook in a different key.

"Some'at warmer than beer would do thee good, Haddock," said the young man. "Here, landlord, let's have a couple o' mugs o' some'at to keep the chill off. A little o' that Holland—that never a gauger clapped eyes on—wouldn't hurt us—and there's the silver down for it!"

"Is Master John Driver here?" asked a sweet voice, which came from a face so closely hooded that, though it peered inside of the door, its features could not be distinguished.

"Yes," said the young man, springing to his feet as suddenly as he would have done with an ounce of lead just sent through his heart. "Yes, mistress. I answer to that hail!"

"You are wanted here, a moment," said the hooded voice.

He was half-way to the speaker before the last word had left her lips; and when he reached her, he took her hand and stepped outside with her.

"What is the matter, my sweet Jennie?" he asked, hurriedly. "What brings you so far from the castle, alone, on such a stormy night?"

"That which must carry us both further, if you *love* me, John. There is a vessel outside which wants a pilot!"

"Why, girl, are you mad? It is blowing fresh now; and before two hours, it will blow thrice as hard!"

"I know it, John; and, therefore, the more need has the vessel, I tell thee, to have a pilot!"

"Sure, Jennie, you are out o' wit to-night!"

"No, John. Hark! there is a gun from her. I told you she wanted a pilot!"

And, as the girl spoke, a deep booming sound came over the face of the roaring sea, and found echo in the rocky cliffs ashore.

"Ay—there is a vessel outside; but what's it to us whether she comes into port or not? Let her carry sail, and drag off from the lee. Why should I risk my life for them I don't know—and who might neither thank nor pay me, after I'd done all that I could for 'em!"

"John, if you ever care to call me wife, as you have sworn to do, you'll at least try to get that vessel into a safe harbor!"

"Why, Jennie, you seem strangely interested for her! Maybe you know somebody aboard?"

"I do not, John—but my young mistress does. I will trust you, John; for I know that you love me, and will not tell. There is some one she loves in that vessel; and her heart is beating wildly for his safety. Now, if you can get the vessel into the 'Bracelet Cove,' a mile or so below the castle—you know it well, for you have often ran your boat there to meet me—I will not say you nay, when you name our wedding hour!"

"By the holy mother, I'll do it Jennie, or make you a heart's widow before you sleep, if you promise me that!"

"I do—and will seal it with a kiss!" she said—suiting the action to the word.

"I'm off, then, in a jiffy!" said the young man, feeling far better from the effects of that kiss than he would have done if he had taken all the "Hollands" the landlord could have set before him.

"When you get on board, tell the captain that Miss Lizzie Egerton sent you," said the girl.

"All right, so far, Jennie; but if you want me to run 'em in to Bracelet Cove there must be a tiny fire lighted, down close under the rocks, at the lower point. Dare you go there to do it, or must I trust some of my mates?"

"I'll go myself and do it, if you will come to see me home after you have got the vessel in safe to an anchor!" said Jennie.

"Will I not? Bless your soul, my brave girl, I love thee more and more each hour I know thee! I'll name the day which is to make thee mine, right shortly, now that it is placed in my power to do it!"

"I shall not play the hoyden, John, only do thy duty this night!" said Jennie; and after giving him one more kiss, she hastened away while the echoes of another gun from the vessel outside were rolling off among the rocky hills.

The sound of the two guns attracted attention from inside; and, while Jennie vanished away in the darkness, several of the fishermen came out to see what was the matter.

"There's somebody outside that wants a pilot," said John to Hannock, his elderly companion, as the latter came to the door.

"She might keep a wanting, for all I'd do, such a night as this is goin' to be!" said the old man. "Why don't she carry sail while she may, and haul off, instead of laying in shore, and firing guns which nobody'll heed!"

"I'm going off to her. I may make more by one night's work for her than I would with the nets in six months. I'm going off to her," said John; and he strode away toward the pier where the boats lay.

"You'll change your mind when you get down where you can feel the wind," said Hannock. And he, with the rest, went back into the inn.

CHAPTER LXXII.

When Lizzie and Venona went quietly to seek for Jennie Rollison, wishing to let no one else know of the errand which they desired to send her on—for they knew that she could be both secret and prudent—she could nowhere be found!

At last, after they had hunted all over the great castle, they learned, from the porter at the gate, that she had passed out a short time before dark, and had gone down toward the port.

What her errand could be away from the castle, at that hour, was more than they could divine; nor could the porter inform them more than that he believed she had friends and relatives down in the village, and might have gone to spend the night with them.

What to do, or whom to send as a messenger now, they did not know. Although they had given up their first intention, of bringing Mr. Simon Wood to bay, by charging him with that which they could not positively prove, and which he would be sure to deny—the cause of Venona's fright in the forest—they would not, for the world, have let him know of their plans, or even of the fact that they

had seen a vessel outside, bound shoreward; for they had not the slightest suspicion that he knew of anything of the matter. He had played the spy most cunningly, indeed.

And whom to trust beside Jennie in the castle, they did not know; for he had all of the retainers under his will, through fear or bribery—for Sir Peter had given him unlimited power over them, and a word from Simon Wood would influence them all nearly as quickly and as powerfully as if it had been uttered by Sir Peter himself.

Uneasy—for their very hopes made them positive that it was the schooner, with their lovers on board, which had been seen by them—they retired to the chamber which both occupied, and from the window of which the sea could be seen, when it was light enough, there to endeavor to study out some plan of action.

The gale was rising very rapidly; and as they heard its loud roar, and the dash of the increasing surges at the foot of the cliff, they trembled, not alone for the safety of the vessel, but with the fear that even if she escaped wreck, she would be driven off from the coast, to return, alas! they knew not when.

They had not been long in their chamber, before the bright flash of the gun for a pilot was seen by Lizzie's quick eyes; and a minute or more later, the dull boom of the cannon fell upon their ears.

"They are calling for a pilot; if one dares to go off, they will come in," said Lizzie; and her cheek flushed and paled, with the alternate emotions of hope and fear.

"Should their nation and character be discovered, their peril will be fearful," said Venona. "They will be captured right before our eyes!"

"I do not fear that danger," said Lizzie. "There is not a cannon within fifty miles of this place, and no force at the port but a half dozen 'preventives' to watch smugglers—and the inhabitants have no arms, even if they felt disposed to risk their lives in an encounter with such brave men as form the schooner's crew! I fear most, at present, from the elements—but look, there is the flash of another gun! They are determined to have a pilot. I must get my uncle's night-glass,* and see if I cannot make them out with its aid!"

And she went and got the telescope, and soon returned; and adjusting it, gazed out toward the sea.

The chance was dim to see anything; for there was no moon, and the stars had to look down through ragged holes in swift-flying clouds, and east but little light upon the water. But the old commodore's telescope was a good one; and soon a low cry of delight broke from Lizzie's lips.

"I see the vessel—it is the schooner. I would know her among a thousand sails. She has a light in her rigging—and there, she burns a blue light. It is as plain as day on board. I can see the officers and crew distinctly!"

"Are they there?" asked Venona.

"Yes—yes," said Lizzie, who knew full well who Venona meant by "they!"

"Yes—I see Morley and Seawaif, and that funny Frenchman, quite plain. And, oh! joy, joy—there is a boat standing out of the port toward them! Brave man—brave man—there is but one, and he is in a tiny shallop; but oh! if he succeeds in gaining the schooner's deck in safety, and brings her in, he shall have a purse of gold from my hand!"

"I pray Heaven he may! Watch him closely, dear Lizzie, and tell me what progress she makes. Does he use a sail?"

"No—he rows with a pair of oars—I can see him plainly, for he has a lantern in the boat with him, and I think that he is seen from the schooner, for her sails are some of them aback, and she is almost stationary. But oh! his is a fearful struggle—that poor brave boatman. At times his boat goes entirely out of my sight between the great, black waves, then it seems to be tossed helplessly upon their foamy crests. He rows with strong arms and a dauntless heart!"

"Heaven bless and help him! It cannot be for mere common gain that he dares such a fearful peril; and yet they cannot have friends upon this coast, other than ourselves!"

Lizzie made no reply to Venona's last re-

* The difference between a night and a day-telescope is, that the former inverts objects—making a vessel, for instance, appear to be standing with her masts downward—the sky being seen as below, and the water above, by the arrangement of the glasses.

mark. She was watching, almost breathlessly, the progress of the boatman.

"Brave man—brave man!—he pulls more feebly, as if he were very tired; but he does not stop. Ah! they see him now, surely, for they hold lights over the side. Yes, and the schooner alters the position of her sails, and runs down toward him," said Lizzie, again.

A few minutes more elapsed; and then, with a sigh which came up as if her heart had been relieved of a load of anxiety, she said: "he is safe on board—he speaks to the officers who crowd to the gangway to meet him. The course of the schooner is altered—ah, it is not for the harbor. Surely she is steering off the coast. There—her lights are extinguished, and I can scarcely see her at all now! It is too bad!"

And poor Lizzie seemed almost ready to weep, from her disappointment.

Excuse us, if we leave her, and look elsewhere a little while.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

At the very time that Jennie Rollison was at the door of the "Jolly Tar," persuading brave John Diver to go off to the schooner (which she knew contained some one in whom her dearly-loved mistress, Lizzie Egerton, felt an interest, though she had not the slightest knowledge beyond what she had gained in overhearing the conversation which her espial upon the movements of Simon Wood enabled her to hear), the last-named individual entered the other tavern, known as the "Herrings," upon a similar errand—he not dreaming that he was forestalled by her.

In that inn, as well as the other, a considerable party of the hardy fishermen of the port had gathered—as they almost always did at night—to drink, and smoke, and spin yarns.

When the agent entered, they all became silent—for he was known, and not liked very well; for he had the reputation of being a close, hard man on the poor—and no such person is ever popular with the masses.

"Tis a stormy night, mates," said he, speaking in a condescending way, as if he would like to make friends among them.

"Ay—one which should keep honest men in doors," said an old rough-spoken skipper, who neither feared man nor fiend.

"A glass of punch 'round wouldn't hurt ye all. Landlord, mix up a bowl for all hands," said the agent, not seeming to heed the manner or matter of the last speaker, while he tossed a piece of gold down before the master of the inn.

"Make room for his honor before the fire!" cried half a dozen voices all at once now; for his unwonted generosity touched the weak spot in their natures, and they were as ready now to bless as they had been to curse him a moment or two sooner.

"Did any of you notice a schooner in the offing, just as the sun set?" continued Simon Wood, as he took a seat by the fire, and glanced around among them.

"No, your honor—there was nothing in shore when the last of our boat came in," said two or three at once.

"Perhaps you could not see her—for she could just be made out from the castle with a glass as the sun sunk out of sight."

"There's no schooner belonging here expected in. It may be some drogher bound up the coast. If it is, she'll have a rough night of it outside. It'll blow great guns afore mornin'!" said the old growler who had spoken first when Wood entered the inn.

The boom of her first gun suddenly sounded upon their ears.

"By the big Herring, there's a gun! A vessel is firing for a pilot!" cried several voices at once.

"That's more than she'll get on a night like this, with the wind blowing right in a fellow's teeth, if he tried to go out," said the old fisherman.

"I'll give any man a couple of golden guineas that'll go out to her, beside the pilotage that he'll make!" said Simon Wood, who had sprung to his feet when he heard the sound of the gun, and who seemed considerably excited.

"Maybe you know what vessel it is, and have an interest in her?" said the old man, looking Wood keenly in the eye.

"No—I do not know what vessel it is," said the agent, confusedly; "but I don't like the idea of a vessel being out in such a gale off our dangerous coast, when a safe harbor is near at hand!"

"If she's acquainted here, and is honest, she'll be apt to find her way in without waiting for a pilot. If not, she's no business here. It may be one of them infernal Yankee privateers, that's the next thing to a pirate—for I've heard that they've been in our channel of late, burning and taking everything they met. There's one Paul Jones I've heard tell of, that's worse than a demon float!"

Another gun was heard.

"She's in earnest about wanting a pilot," said Wood. "She shall have one, if money will hire him. I'll give five guineas to the man that'll go off to her!"

A dozen of the fishermen rose and went to the door at this; for five golden guineas was a large sum to be owned by such men as they. But, when they looked out into the darkness, and heard the dashing of the angry surf, as it rolled in toward the shore, and the howling of the rising gale, they shook their heads, and came back, one by one, to wait for the punch which the landlord was mixing.

All came in but the old growler, before alluded to, and the agent.

"There's some one going out on his own hook, without waiting to hear your five-guinea bid," said the old man, after they had stood by the door some minutes.

And he pointed to a light which went dancing up and down on the waves of the harbor, evidently at some distance from the shore.

"Yes, yes!—Who can it be?" said Wood, eagerly.

"Heaven only knows—and will not tell such a whitewashed sinner as you are, or such a bad chicken as the like of me!"

"I'd give a guinea to know!" said Wood—not heeding the insulting words or sneering manner of the old man—who had, evidently, no liking for him.

"Mayhap you can find out for less money, by going over to the other inn. A bowl of punch there may make you as worshipful as it has done with some here!"

"Yes; the man may have gone from there. I must find out who sent him, or what induced him to go, when no reward can induce others to go."

And the agent started off in the gloom.

"Hallo!—a word before we part, Simon Wood, Esquire!" cried the old man.

"What d'ye want?" asked the agent.

"Speak quick—for I'm in a hurry."

"I want to know if it's your *own* money you're so liberal with, to-night?" said the old fisherman, in a sarcastic tone.

"Mind your own business!" growled the agent, turning to go, while the fisherman returned to the inn, to look at the bowl of punch which the landlord had by this time prepared.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

When the agent entered the "Jolly Tar," he was received as coldly by the inmates there as he had been at first at the "Herrings." His reputation was evidently in advance of him. But he was in a hurry now, and didn't want to stand on so much ceremony here, but to make what friends he could as soon as possible.

"This is a nasty night, landlord," he cried, "a night to make men huddle close to the fire, and like a sip of something strong and warm with their pipes. Mix up a rousing bowl of punch for all hands, at my expense," and he threw down here, as he had at the other inn, a gold piece before the willing inn-master.

Room was quickly made for the liberal agent to approach the fire, and a change seemed to come over the faces which had looked black when he entered.

"I wonder what's in the wind now?" muttered Hanneck, the chum of John Diver, to himself, as he heard the order, and saw how unusually complacent the agent was.

"Ah! Master Hanneck, how are you to-night?" said the agent, who knew him well, for they had had hard words more than once about the rent of a little cottage in which he stowed his family.

"I don't know as I'm the better for seeing Simon Wood," said the old man, testily. "I don't often see him, except when *his* due!"

"Oh! don't speak of that, Master Hanneck. When I go to see *you*, I *do* act for myself, but for the estate; and *must* do my duty or lose my berth, you know."

"You'd never lose your berth with Sir Peter for being a bit easy with his oldest friends," said Hanneck, roughly. "But that's neither here nor there. I owe you nothing till next Michaelmas, at any rate."

"No—of course not; but let by-gones be by-gones, and wash away their remembrance in a glass of grog. By-the-way, where's your fishing-mate, honest John Diver?"

"A woman called him to the door, a bit ago, and he hasn't come back yet," said Hanneck.

"A woman, eh? He's a gay lad amongst the girls, I warrant."

"An honest one, Simon Wood, who, had he place and power, would suffer his right hand to be cut off before he'd injure or oppress one of them—and that is more than can be said of some who'd hold their heads above his if they could," said Hanneck, sharply. And then he chuckled to himself: "I reckon that touched Simon under the gills."

"I heard a vessel firing guns for a pilot outside, a little while ago. Surely Master John Diver wouldn't attempt to go off the coast in such a terrible storm as this is?" said the wily agent.

"A man as honest and brave as he is, will go wherever he thinks duty leads him," said Hanneck, quietly.

"What duty could call a man out on a night like this?"

"Duty to his fellow-creatures, if he thought they needed help—a thing I reckon you don't understand much about," said the old fisherman, drily.

"It must be he that is rowing off to the vessel. It is a terrible storm; and a man risks his life to face it," said the agent—singularly insensible, for *him*, to the insulting words of the man he had talked with.

"Did you see a boat going outside?" asked the old man.

"Yes," said Wood; "or the light of one bobbing up and down in the seaway."

"I'll see if Jack has taken the boat," said Hanneck, and, seizing his "sou-wester" hat, he put it on his head, and sallied forth toward the pier where the boats usually were moored.

He was closely followed by the agent, who, in both cases, seemed to forget all about the punch which he had ordered and paid for, or even getting the change which was due to him.

"Yes; the boat's gone, and John in it. Hallo!—they're burning blue lights outside. I wonder what can be up!" said the old man as he stood upon the pier and looked seaward.

"Did you know what woman it was that called John Diver out?" asked the agent, abruptly.

"No; and if I did, I'd see you soaking in ten fathoms water before I'd tell *you*!" said Hanneck, fiercely.

"I'll soon find out," muttered the agent, as he turned on his heel and hurried away.

"It must have been either Miss Egerton or Venona Dorset—for they only knew of the vessel's approach—they only had cause to feel an interest in her safety. But I would not believe that they would dare to venture out from the castle at such a time of night, and in such a storm. But I'll soon find out; and then, if Sir Humphrey is only as 'far over the bay' as usual in his wine, I'll worm out of him the secret about this vessel—for he must know something about it, I think!"

The agent now said no more, but hurried along on his way to the castle, leaving the inmates of both the "Herrings" and the "Jolly Tar" to enjoy their punch without his presence—a matter not at all disagreeable to most of them.

And now, reader, I know you'll be glad to meet our gallant privateersmen once more, so we'll go aboard.

CHAPTER LXXV.

At the very moment when Lizzie Egerton had first discovered the white sail in the far-away seaboard, from the look-out tower on the castle, Edward Seawaif and Eugene Morley were in the fore-top of the schooner, engaged with the glasses in gazing toward the shore. They could see the port, and could also distinctly make out the gray towers of the castle—for, looming up from the crest of the hilly coast, they had the clear sky for a back-ground. But they could not, at that great distance, discover that there were watchers also gazing anxiously toward them from the castle; but that secret sympathy which always plays the telegraph unseen between hearts that love, told them that they were not undiscovered—that they were near those to whom their hearts were linked by the holy chain of love!

"I wish that we had two hours more of daylight," said Seawaif. "We can't trust a chart

to run in by at night; and we're going to have a heavy storm, or I'm out of my reckoning."

"A storm is surely close at hand; but we shall be in near enough to be seen quite plain from the harbor by dark, and perhaps a pilot will come off," said Morley.

"We will try and bring one by signal," said the other.

They remained but a little while aloft; for the night with its darkness came rapidly on, and they could not make out the land any longer, even with the aid of their glasses.

Seawaif ran the schooner in as far as he dared to—for, though his lead gave deep soundings, he knew on that coast he would carry them close up to the shoals or rocks, upon which wreck would be all too easy. Then he hauled her up on a wind, and laying his topsail aback—for he yet carried them—ordered a gun fired for a pilot.

Then he carefully scanned the dim outline of the shore, to see if he could discover the evidence of an answer.

"I see a light in a tower of the castle!" said he, in a low tone to Morley. And then he gave the order to fire another gun for a pilot.

"If they are watching us from the castle," said Morley, "and have a glass, they might recognize the schooner, if we showed a blue-light or two!"

"That is so!" said Seawaif. "I was careless not to have adopted or named some signal when we parted with them, by which they might have recognized us either by night or day. But have the blue-lights burned—they can do no harm, and will do to direct a pilot, if one should be so bold as to try to come off in the face of the gale that's blowing up!"

"Hain't I better reef down the top-sails, sir?" asked Mr. Doolittle, who was watch-officer at the time. "The spars are buckling like whip-stalks!"

"Yes, sir, do so!" said Seawaif; and in a few moments, the active crew had reduced sail.

The blue-lights now threw their sulphuric glare across the waters, lighting up, while they lasted, the vessel and every one on board.

"A boat is coming off—I see her light distinctly!" said Seawaif, shortly after the first blue-light had burned out. "Burn another blue-light and also hang lights over the side!"

This was done, and Seawaif, who had got his glass fixed upon the boat, watched its progress toward him with anxiety.

"It is a hard pull in such a seaway for a single man!" he said. "Mr. Doolittle, let the men tend sheets and braces; we'll fill away and run down toward him!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the ready response, and in a few minutes, *conned** by the captain, the schooner was running in toward the shore again.

In a very short time they were close down to the boat; and running just to leeward of it, they rounded to, flattening in the sheets, and bracing sharp up, then with their main-top-sail aback, and jib sheet to windward, lay easy for the pilot to come on board.

In a few minutes, John Diver was on the deck of the schooner, and he at once asked for her commander.

"I am he!" said Seawaif. "Have you a message for me?"

"Yes, your honor!" said the young fisherman, in a low tone, touching his hat. "I've orders from a lady to pilot you into a snug cove a league or so below the castle, and I'm ready to do it."

"Orders from Miss Egerton?" asked the young captain, taking the pilot aft.

"Yes, your honor!" said Diver.

"Then all is right. I'll put the schooner under your charge. Take her safely in, and you'll not have to ask for your reward!"

"Thanks, your honor—I reckon I'll get paid ashore."

"And aboard, too. How do you want us to steer?"

"Keep your tack aboard, sir, and stand off under easy sail, until a beacon is lighted for me; and then have your anchors all ready to come to in a narrow berth. We've but a small place to go into, and a narrow channel to go in at; but once there, and the worst hurricane that ever blew can't harm you."

"Very well; give your own directions as to the sail you want, and the course to steer—but first come in the cabin, and take something warm after your hard pull!"

* To con a ship, is to watch her course, and direct the helmsman how to steer.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

When Simon Wood returned to the castle, he asked of the old porter at the gate if either of the young ladies had passed out that evening. The old man, who had neither the liking for, nor the fear of, the agent which was felt by most of the other retainers, saw by the manner of Wood that something affecting the young ladies was in the mind of the agent, and he replied that they had not, carefully refraining even a hint that he had seen them.

"What woman has gone from the castle since dark?" asked Wood, sternly.

"No woman has passed the gate since dark!" said the porter, speaking truly, for it was yet twilight when pretty Jenny Rollison went by him.

"It is rather strange! Who could it be that induced John Diver to go off to that vessel? But I'll find it out from him in the morning, and who and what these lovers are that awaken such an interest in the hearts of the noble demoiselles. I'll do it, or Master John Diver will find this region too hot for him to live in!"

And the agent passed on, soliloquizing still as he went:

"That was a glorious kiss, a wild and dangerous embrace to-day, but I could not help it. She looked so peerlessly beautiful as she lay there on the mossy bank—her rosy lips parted over her pearly teeth—her bosom rising and falling in the light and shadow—her peerless form so perfectly displayed in her careless attitude of grace—it would have maddened Plato! She more than suspects me—so does Miss Egerton; yet they dare not charge the matter home. They shall have more to charge ere long if the lady is not less haughty and more lenient. It is an easy thing to get her in my power here, and she wanders about so much, that her disappearance could be accounted for without bringing suspicion on my head! But I must see Sir Hunphrey, and try to find out if he knows anything about an expected schooner and certain lovers. If, as usual, he still lingers over his wife, it will not be a hard task—if not, I must endeavor to get his company over a jorum of punch. I think I can manage it then well enough."

The unscrupulous schemer then moved on into the castle to carry out his designs.

It was well that John Diver got on board of the schooner so soon as he did; for the gale increased rapidly in strength, and the sea ran higher and higher every moment. He had not been on board a half hour before Seawaif was obliged to furl his topsails, and the schooner had all that she could stagger under, as she luffed to the wind under her foresail, jib, and mainsail.

Meantime, with the night-glass in his hand, the volunteer pilot kept his station by the quarter, and looked down the coast to see the beacon-fire, which pretty Jennie had promised to light for him. He dared not steer for Bracelet Cove until he saw that light.

At last, far away—for the schooner had edged up in the wind, until she was well off shore—he saw its red gleam flash up suddenly in the darkness, and he cried to Seawaif:

"You can brail up your foresail, sir, if you please, and ease off the main and jib sheets. We'll run down for that light, with the wind quartering!"

The necessary orders were given, and in a few moments the schooner, obeying her helm and canvas, veered off nearly before the wind, and sped away, like a winged bird, toward the dark and rocky coast.

Seawaif felt some anxiety, for he knew that if the pilot was either unskillful or treacherous, there would be no hope for the vessel; nor yet for him and the crew, if the schooner was wrecked, and they did escape to the shore—for he had recently performed some daring deeds in the British channel and along the coast, taking and burning vessels almost under the guns of some of their forts, and sending in saucy messages by such prisoners as he took—for he chose rather to liberate them on parole, than be hampered with the care of them. But he had been cautious not to let the pilot know the nationality of his vessel—in truth, John had been too anxious about the beacon-fire and the rising gale to think of that—and the chances, whatever they were, must now be taken.

As the vessel rushed in shoreward, the dark loom of the lofty cliffs could be dimly made out; and the fire lighted at the foot of the rocks could be seen, growing brighter and

brighter as they advanced, and as occasionally fresh fuel was thrown upon it.

"There is a female attending that fire!" said Seawaif to John Diver, as he lowered the glass, through which he had been examining it.

"Yes, sir!" said he; and then speaking to the helmsman, he said: "Port your helm there, and let her come up half a point—there, steady so—keep her at that!"

"Surely Miss Egerton would not venture out alone on such a night?" said Seawaif.

"It is not her. It is a friend of hers, that I hope yet to call Mrs. Jack Diver, sir!" said the honest young fisherman. "And that she is a trump, you may know; for she first got me to come off to pilot you, and then traveled well on to four miles around the castle, alone, to get where she is now, to build that fire, so that I might know how to run you into the cove."

"She is indeed a treasure, and shall not come to you without a dowry!" said Seawaif.

"You'd better be ready to take in sail quick, sir, and have all clear with your anchors, for we can run but a little ways after we shoot in by the fire!" said Diver now; and he gave an order to the helmsman to keep away a trifle more.

The dash of the great waves against the rocky wall before them could now be plainly heard, and many an anxious eye peered out in the gloom ahead to see a sign or opening of a harbor. But none met the eye—only an unbroken line of rock seemed to rise out of the sea.

On—on, the faster it seemed, as she neared the peril, drove the swift bark—the men standing at the halliards and down-hauls—on, with the great black cliff towering away up in the sky, higher than her mast-heads—on, and now the pilot himself sprung to the helm.

The fire gleamed up close before them, their flying jib-boom seemed almost over it; then the pilot shoved the helm hard astarboard, and the cliff seemed to open for them, for they shot in through a dark, lofty gorge, turned an angle of rock, and in a few seconds were beyond the influence of the wind in a smooth little basin, which seemed to have been scooped out by the hand of Providence as a haven of safety.

"Stay there till I come in a boat for ye, Jennie!" shouted John Diver, as the vessel flew past the fire; and in half a minute afterward, he said to Seawaif: "In sails, sir, if you please, and drop your anchor, for she'll have but little room to swing in, and headway must be checked, or she'll butt her brains out against the rocks ahead!"

In as little time, ay, less, than it would take us to describe it, the schooner's sails were furled and her anchors down; and the pilot, with a smile upon his coarse, but honest face, stood and heard the praise of Seawaif who had just placed a purse of gold in his hands. The pilot would have refused a reward so princely, but the young officer would not hear of it, but told him to keep secret the fact of the schooner's arrival, except with those only whom it concerned to know (the ladies), and the reward should be doubled when he went to sea.

"And now, my brave man, the next thing which I want to know is, how, when, and where I can see Miss Egerton?"

"That I cannot say, sir, but Jennie can tell you—she that lighted the beacon-fire, and waits by it yet for me!"

"Then I will have a boat lowered and sent for her!"

"You had better send me, sir; she'd hardly come aboard with a stranger!" said John.

"Very well; go and bring her, and assure her she will be safe here, and free to go with you when she desires!"

The boat was lowered, manned, and with Mr. Doolittle in charge—for he volunteered to go—it rowed rapidly back to the entrance of the cove, where the fire, now no longer needed, was burning low. But it burned bright enough to make Jennie Rollison look very handsome, as she stood there with the gale blowing out her curling tresses, and the color of excitement flushing her cheek, and its light brightening her eyes.

"Jerusalem! what a pretty gal she is!" exclaimed Mr. Doolittle—loud enough to be heard even by her; and as she looked at his tall, slim, and ungainly figure, and his sharp-featured, cheese-colored face and yellowish hair, a comical smile came over her face.

"You'd better mind your helm, or you'll stove your boat!" said John Diver, sharply,

for he, like most lovers, didn't care to hear his sweetheart's beauty praised by another man.

The officer, however, was not so careless as that; he shifted his tiller over at the right time, and rounded the boat alongside of the rocky shore, upon which the pilot sprang.

When John told Jennie that the commander of the schooner wanted to see her, she at first objected to go on board; but when he told her that it was to arrange with her how and when he could meet Miss Egerton, she thought how necessary it would be to have such an understanding; and she permitted herself to be helped into the boat by him—refusing, to his infinite delight, the proffered services of Mr. Doolittle, who seemed exceedingly anxious to help her.

The lieutenant seemed rather chagrined at this, but gave his orders to push off, while he stowed an extra-sized chew of tobacco in his exceedingly large mouth; and in a short time the boat was again alongside of the schooner.

Jennie was received on deck by Seawaif, who invited her and John into the cabin. Mr. Doolittle, seeming to be magnetically attracted, followed; but Seawaif, observing him, said:

"You will please to attend to putting the vessel in order, sir. You can also say to Mr. Morley that I wish to see him here!"

The lieutenant didn't seem to like this expulsion from the presence of Jennie during the intended interview, but he knew better than to disobey orders there; and therefore he turned away to do as he had been bidden.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

"You have done me a very great service, you and your brave friend here!" said Seawaif to Jennie, as he placed in her hand a purse quite as heavy as that which he had given to John.

"Ah, sir, I do not deserve this. I only wished to please Miss Lizzie, and surprise her, for she did not know what I was going to do!"

"Why, Jennie, you told me Miss Lizzie sent you?" said John Diver, in utter astonishment. "How could you?" and he seemed displeased and hurt that she had deceived him.

"Just let me explain how I knew what she wanted, and why I did as I have done, John, and then blame me if you can!" said Jennie, coloring up at the rebuke, which both his words and tone implied.

And then she told all about Simon Wood, and his dogging the girls in their walks, and his espial upon them in the tower, and how she had doubled on him, and had learned, from their conversation, that they had those on the sea, and in a schooner, which they looked for and whom they loved; and for fear if she said anything to them she might have been discovered or delayed, she had concluded to do as she had done.

While she spoke of Simon Wood and his unwelcome attentions to Venona Dorset, more than one low-muttered threat broke from the lips of Morley, and when she alluded to him as a mean, low wretch, who had more than once insulted her, John Diver swore that he'd not leave a whole bone in his body when he met him. So Simon made two very dangerous enemies by information gained in that hour.

"You have acted most wisely and well!" said Seawaif to Jennie, as she closed her story. "And your young mistress will be more obliged to you than I can explain to you now. You must manage to let her and Miss Dorset know where we are, without informing any one else. And that you may know how I trust, and how important is the secret which I confide in you, know that you stand this moment in the cabin of an American privateer!"

"My goodness! A Yankee vessel!" exclaimed Jennie, turning pale.

"I shall be hung for treason, for piloting you in here!" said John Diver, in dismay.

"Be not alarmed, either of you. No one but yourselves and the ladies, who already know it, will discover who we are, even if we are found out in this out-of-the-way place. We are not here to do any harm to the people—we only come to see those we love, which you two cannot blame us for!" said Seawaif.

"No, sir—not that, but if we should be found out, it would go hard with us; and if you should be taken, why, the poor young ladies would die!" said Jennie.

"You shall be held harmless, for you can lie back to the castle before dawn, and good John can get back to his quarters also, and no one shall know that you have been near us. You can tell the ladies where we lay, and

doubtless a plan will soon be contrived for them to meet us in safety!"

"That's so, sir?" said John, beginning to feel reassured. "You've acted the perfect gentleman with us so far, and I know you'd never betray those who've helped you. If you'll set me and Jennie ashore, we'll get back; and if Simon Wood does get on your track, I'll throw him off or break his neck!"

Writing a brief note for Lizzie and Venona, which he intrusted to Jennie, Seawaif now caused her and her lover to be set on shore; and then quietly waited for day to dawn, that he might see how his vessel lay, what her position was for defence and escape, if it was required.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Sir Humphrey had just left the table and his last solitary bottle, when Simon Wood, on his return to the castle, met him, with the intention, as expressed in his soliloquy, of pumping him for information on points yet involved in mystery to that individual.

"Ah, Sir Humphrey, I was just looking for you!" said the agent, as they met.

"Well, Mr. Wood, I'm tolerably portly, especially easy to be found about dinner-time or a little later. What is wanted?"

"Why, Sir Humphrey, 'tis a very wild and stormy night outside, and the gale sounds gloomy about these old halls and towers, I thought that if you would condescend so far as to visit my poor apartments, I might make things a great deal more cheerful for you as well as myself, over a bowl of nice hot punch. I have prime materials there—a blazing fire, you can enjoy a pipe, and should you wish, I'll try to amuse you with some of the old legends of the castle. They are many. In fact, the old servants think the place is haunted, but the only spirits I've seen come from the wine-vaults. Will you do me the honor, Sir Humphrey?"

"Why, yes, Mr. Wood; you've such a 'winning way' with you, that when you mention punch, pipe, a blazing fire, and a good story or two to boot, I can't find it in my heart to refuse you. But the 'blossoms' will be expecting to see me in the drawing-room—I'd better see them first."

"I'll send a servant with your excuses to them, Sir Humphrey. Let me beg you to go directly to my poor quarters, where all is ready for brewing the best punch that you ever tasted!"

"Well, well—I can't say you nay. Lead the way, and I'll follow on the scent!"

The two passed on through a dimly-lighted hall to a stair-case, where a servant stood in waiting with a light in his hand.

Taking this from him, the agent ordered the servant to inform the young ladies that the baronet would be engaged for a while; and then, in a tone too low to be heard by the latter, said: "See that no one intrudes upon us!"

"Well, on my word—'poor quarters'—your 'poor quarters!' Why, Wood, you're quartered like a prince!" said the baronet, as he entered the room, which the agent designed to occupy that evening.

It was a large, old-fashioned, but elegantly-furnished sitting-room. The walls were hung with paintings, portraits, sea-scenes, hunting-sketches, and landscapes. In a huge fire-place blazed a goodly quantity of oak wood, and more lay at hand ready to use for its replenishment. Full in front of it was a large, round table, and on it were sundry black bottles, a basket of lemons, a bowl of sugar, and a huge, antique punch-bowl, which looked as if it had served many generations. Before the fire, pulling out a wreathy jet of steam, upon some coals, sat the kettle of hot water. And on the broad mantel above, a variety of pipes laid in sight.

The baronet glanced at this spiritual preparation with a look of pleased satisfaction, then turned to look at the pictures.

"Why—why, how in Heaven came that here?" he asked, with every mark of surprise in his features, as he looked at the portrait of a young man, elegantly appareled in a court dress, with several orders on his breast.

"That, sir? Why, it is the portrait of Lord Egerton, taken when he was young—so Sir Peter Parker told me."

"Why, so it is—so it is; but it reminded me so much of one whom I have seen since, that I thought it had been taken lately. The likeness is surprising. Venona and Lizzie must see it."

"Who does it resemble, sir?" asked the agent, so abruptly and so eagerly, that he put even the dull baronet on his guard, for the latter replied:

"No one that you know, Mr. Wood. No one that you know. Upon a second look I do not know as the likeness is so great after all!"

The agent bit his lip with vexation. He felt that he had been upon the very point of gaining some insight into the mystery which perplexed him. But, though foiled, he was not defeated—his hopes lay in the effects which the punch might produce; and drawing up a large, cushioned, high-backed chair beside the table and before the fire, he seated the baronet. He drew another chair near, but did not sit down. The punch was yet to be brewed.

"There is a great deal of science in brewing a good punch, Sir Humphrey!" said the agent, taking up a lemon, and beginning to take off the rind carefully, not touching the pulp at all.

"You speak truly, Mr. Wood—truly!" said the baronet, leaning back in his comfortable chair, and crossing one dumpy leg over the other—a matter which seemed quite difficult.

The agent saw what was wanted, and went and brought a foot-stool, which elevated the pedal extremities of the baronet in a more comfortable manner.

"Ah, thank ye, Mr. Wood, thank ye; 'tis very thoughtful in you."

After the agent had peeled some half dozen or more lemons, he placed the rinds in the punch-bowl, and added such a quantity of sugar as he thought necessary. He then poured a very small quantity of hot water in the bowl, to dissolve the sugar and extract the aroma of the lemon and the more exquisite acid which is found in the rind. Then he placed the kettle back on the coals.

"This old Jamaica rum," said he, taking up one of the bottles, "was brought from the West Indies nearly thirty years ago by Sir Peter Parker, while he was a lieutenant."

"It must be mellow as oil!" said the baronet, watching the rich color of the liquid as it went in a flood of sapphire light down into the bowl.

"This brandy, I expect, came into this country without ever having paid duty, for in former days vast quantities of cognac were smuggled in on this coast, and it is said that the smugglers seldom forgot to leave toll at the castle!" continued the agent, as he emptied nearly a bottle of brandy into the bowl, and gently stirred the contents with the silver ladle.

"This arrack," he continued, producing a square, green bottle, "Sir Peter purchased in Calcutta, many, many years ago. It gives body, as well as flavor, to the punch!"

After he had stirred these ingredients up for a little time, he took up the kettle, and poured in boiling water for a few moments, until he had reduced it as much as he wished. And then he pronounced the punch brewed—for in that era they knew nothing of the now indispensable addition of a couple of bottles of champagne, and a quart of good, green tea.

He now raised the bowl upon a small iron tripod, and placed under it a lighted spirit-lamp, to keep its contents warm. Then going to a side-board, he selected two large silver goblets, which gave an advantage to the drinker—in that no one could observe how much or how little he drank, as would be the case were the drinking-cups of glass. Filling one of these for the baronet, he handed it to him, and said:

"There, Sir Humphrey, is a punch made *secundum artem*, and I doubt if it can be much improved by any one!"

Then taking care to only partially fill his own goblet, he took a seat in the opposite chair, and awaited the test opinion of Sir Humphrey.

"It is indeed a capital punch, Mr. Wood—capital! Why, sir, you are a philosopher!" said the latter, as he took a sip of the beverage, which brought out a richer glow upon his ruddy face. "This is comfort, indeed, and the *sough* of the wind outside makes it all the heartier for us in here! I pity those who are out at sea, though, in such a gale; especially if they're off a coast like ours!"

"Yes, there would be danger, indeed. You do not expect any one in our harbor, about this time, do you, Sir Humphrey?"

"Me? No, sir—not here! True, Sir Peter expected to be ordered home after his failure at Charleston, but his vessel wouldn't come into this little harbor. It couldn't!"

The agent saw that the baronet was not mellow enough yet for close-questioning, so he paused, until he saw that the goblet of Sir Humphrey was emptied, and then he hastened to refill it.

"That punch is delicious, Mr. Wood. Some way I think you must have been born a gentleman, for you have the manners and capacities of one."

"Sir, there is as good blood in my veins as any family, not royal, can boast in the realm!" said Simon Wood, proudly. "How I became reduced to my present position, or why I permit myself under an *alias* to remain in my present obscurity, is for the time my secret! But, Sir Humphrey, the day may come, and I hope that it is not far distant, when I can reveal myself to you—and then, sir, then you will not deem it *condescension* on your part to favor me with your company!"

"Condescension, my dear Mr. Wood? *Condescension* in me to sit with a man who can brew such a glorious bowl of punch as this? Ah, it is a pleasure, an honor, not a condescension!" and the baronet emptied his second goblet, which was speedily replenished by the wily agent, who pretended also to refill his own, from which he had only sipped a few drops.

"You promised to tell me some stories, also, my dear Mr. Wood!" said the baronet.

"I will, Sir Humphrey; but first let me fill a pipe for you. I have here some Turkish tobacco, brought by Sir Peter from Constantinople years since."

The agent, having done this, sat down, and said, that he would relate a **TRADITIONALY LEGEND OF EGERTON CASTLE.**

CHAPTER LXXIX.

"This legend was told to me," said the agent, "by a very old man, who was in his second childhood, and, consequently, garrulous—and I doubt about there being a word of truth in it. But it may serve to amuse you, and so I'll tell it as it came to me:

"A great many years ago, when one of the earlier Egerton earls dwelt here—a very stern and fiery-tempered man he was—he had a daughter said to be the most beautiful of her race. She was so exceedingly lovely that no man looked upon her whose heart did not melt adoringly at once. The fame of her loveliness went far and wide; and many of the bravest, most handsome, and noblest of the land came and sought her hand.

"Her father saw this; and, though it gratified his pride, he looked upon all who came with a jealous eye, and almost with hatred—for he so loved his child that he could not bear the thought that another should ever bear her from his side."

"I know just how he felt. I've felt so about my blossom—my Venona!" said Sir Humphrey, emptying his goblet once more.

The agent had a mind to ask him if any one had sought to win Venona from him yet; but then he feared the baronet was not mellow enough to yield a direct answer, and he refrained, and continued his story:

"But there was one among the many who loved her whom no common obstacle could foil—one who, when he had a desire, knew but one thought, and that was to obtain it. He was of noble blood, but had no title—for he was a younger son. But he was proud, headstrong, wild, adventurous; and, until he had seen, by chance, the beautiful Lady Jane, had been as reckless and dissolute as any of the young men of his day—going as far into all extravagancies as his means would permit.

"But, from the hour when fate threw him into a spot where he saw her, he changed utterly, and in every way. All at once, his companions, who had noticed this change, missed him; and it was reported that he had gone to serve in arms in some foreign land. But that was not the case. He loved too wildly and too much to tear himself away from the sight of the star before which he had laid his heart's worship. And knowing that none but those who had wealth and lordly rank could ever enter her presence, as *visitors*, he disguised himself, so well that his nearest of kin would not have known him, and entered the service of the earl as a huntsman.

"This gave him frequent opportunities to see—though at a distance—the idol of his soul; for she, as well as her father, was exceedingly fond of the chase, and very frequently enjoyed the sport."

"Yes; the Egertons, like the Dorseys, all had hunting blood in their veins," said the baronet.

"The young huntsman," continued the agent, "by his skill and courage, attracted, more than once, the notice of both the earl and his daughter; and, as he was not ill-looking, and his costume well became his splendid figure, he began not only to hope, but to believe, that the Lady Jane really felt attached toward him, humble as was his position."

"But all too soon was he awakened from this dream of bliss. One day, when the lady, by accident, had become separated from her party, and a rising shower forced her to take shelter under the shelf of a cliff near the castle, he being the only attendant near, he cast himself at her feet, proclaimed his name and his passion, told her why he was in disguise, and that life, without her love, was to him worse than worthless."

"She received his address with a scorn so bitter, a contempt so intense, that he rose to his feet and swore he would humble her pride."

"And but for hearing the tramp of approaching horses, and knowing that some of her friends, perhaps the earl himself, was near, he had done some desperate deed, all too fearful for me to tell. She heard the sounds; and, though but an instant before she had stood and gasped in pallid terror, the color came now to her face, and she bade him begone, or she would deliver him to the merited anger and vengeance of her father."

"He mounted his horse and fled; but, ere he rode out of her presence, he swore a terrible oath, that he should yet humble her, or that both should perish!"

"She shuddered when she heard him; but he rode off: and she was in a few moments joined by her father and his party, who had been alarmed at her absence, and sought her. When they came up, she greeted them as usual, not choosing to alarm her father by relating her recent peril."

"She did very wrong in that," said Sir Humphrey, turning up the bottom of his goblet again. "My blossom wouldn't do so. I'll warrant if any hound should dare to insult her she'd tell me, and I'd right soon have him by the ears!"

The agent smiled, and replenished the baronet's goblet, but made no response. He then continued his story:

"The huntsman suddenly disappeared, much to the surprise and regret of the earl, who had, more than once, given him tokens of his favor."

"Weeks went on, and the lady, who, for a time, remembered his fearful threat, and was cautious never to be for a moment without attendants, one day got separated from them in the excitement of the chase, and it was long years before she was again heard of."

"When the earl and her attendants missed her, their alarm was intense; and search was made for her near and far, in every nook and corner, beneath every cliff, in every lake and stream, over hill and dale; but all in vain. It nearly killed the earl—for, though he had sons, she was his only daughter, and his heart's pride!"

"Poor man!—how I can pity him! Were I to lose my blossom, I'd die!—I know I should!" said the baronet.

"Years after," continued the agent, "a poor gibbering maniac woman was found at the gate of the castle; and, to the horror of the earl and all who had known her in her loveliness and purity, it was discovered that she was the wreck of the hapless Lady Jane. The huntsman had kept his oath!"

"The infernal scoundrel!" cried the excited baronet. "He ought to have been whipped to death with nettles!—bit to death by Bermuda sand-flies, and roasted forever in the hottest fire that could be found!"

"Let me fill up for you again, Sir Humphrey—you touch the punch lightly."

"You may, Mr. Wood—you may. That story is enough to sober any man. I shall remember it so long as I live. Poor girl—poor girl!"

The baronet felt so bad that he emptied the goblet, this time at once, and handed it to the agent, who very readily poured out another ladleful of the strong punch—for he began to look anxiously to see it produce some effect on his guest.

"You don't drink, Mr. Wood—you don't do justice to your own grog," said Sir Humphrey.

"Oh! yes, sir, I do—this is my fourth goblet. I am but one behind you, and I'll soon be even there. Let me refill your pipe."

"Thank you; you are very kind, my dear Mr. Wood. Really, you are very good."

Without you, I should be vastly dull in the castle."

And the baronet blew a cheerful cloud of smoke from his lips, and then sipped again and again of the punch, pronouncing it to grow better and better the longer it steamed over the lamp.

CHAPTER LXXX.

At last the baronet began to show signs of being a fit subject for the cunning agent to work upon, to worm out the mystery about which he was so anxious.

"Miss Venona is very beautiful, far more handsome than Miss Egerton, I think, Sir Humphrey," said Wood.

"Yes—my blossom is as pretty as a pink. And she is as good as she is handsome!"

"I should think, that before this she would have had more than one young man's heart at her feet!"

"Who said she hadn't?—who said she hadn't? But no one shall ever have her—no one shall ever have her!" said the baronet, hastily, showing more and more the effects of his libations.

"It blows terribly outside—terribly," said the agent, suddenly and artfully changing the subject. "The schooner which the young ladies were looking at, at sunset, will have a hard time of it!"

"The schooner? What schooner?" cried the baronet, aroused, and springing to his feet.

"I do not know what schooner, sir—but it was one which the young ladies seemed to recognize, and feel a deep interest in!"

"By Bacchus!—they wouldn't dare to come in here. But young Seawail is as bold as a lion, and he dare do anything; and Morley loves Venona; but he shan't have her—he shan't have her!" cried Sir Humphrey.

"Who are Seawail and Morley, sir?" asked Wood; but again his eagerness awakened the prudence of the baronet, inebriated as he was, and the latter was on his guard, answering:

"Nobody that you know, Mr. Wood—nobody that you know. But excuse me, I must go and see the blossoms, and learn what they did reel!"

"Oh! they can tell you no more than I, Sir Humphrey! They only saw a vessel which looked like a schooner, just as the sun was setting. If she is still outside, she can be seen in the morning. Come, sir—take at least one more goblet of my punch—you praise it, but you scarcely do it justice in the quantity you take!"

The baronet sunk back into his chair again, and emptied another goblet; but the agent could pump nothing more out of him. The strength of the liquor, and the heat of the fire united, produced a sleepiness which soon placed him in a profound stupor.

Wood now rung for servants. When they came, he directed them to remove the baronet to his room, and to place him in bed.

He did not retire—he felt that he could not sleep; and he waited with impatience for the dawn to appear, that he might see whether the schooner had got safely into the harbor or not.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

It was almost dawn when Jennie Rollison—brave, true-hearted Jennie—who had been escorted to the gate of the castle by good John Diver, rewarded him with a sweet kiss, and renewing the promise which had induced him to that night's peril and successful work, parted with him—he to go to the port, she to get within to her room, unseen, if possible.

"I declare, there is a light in the young ladies' room yet!" she said, as she glanced toward their window. "I do wonder if the poor creatures have been up and watching all the night. I may as well go and tell them the news at once. I couldn't sleep and keep so great a secret all to myself!"

A few minutes later, Lizzie Egerton—who had not retired, or even undressed—heard a low, timid knock at her door. Arousing Venona, who had fallen asleep in her chair, she said:

"Who can it be, coz, who comes to us at such an hour?"

The knock was repeated, and Jennie's low voice heard, gently asking:

"Please to let me come in, Miss Lizzie?"

"It is a woman, whoever it is—there can be no danger," said Lizzie, and she unbolted the door.

"Jennie Rollison, as I live!" she cried, in surprise, as she looked on Jennie's flushed face and disordered hair. "Why, where have you

been, my girl? We were looking for you everywhere!"

"I have been at work for you, lady," said Jennie.

"At work for me? I do not understand you!"

"Please to tell me what you wanted me for, Miss Lizzie, and then I will explain to you what I have been doing!"

"We wanted to send you to the village upon an errand," replied Lizzie.

"To try and get a pilot for the schooner which you saw just at sunset, and which was firing the signal-guns soon after dark, was it not?"

"Why Jennie, you are a witch! How do you know that?"

"Because I was very close to you when you were looking at the vessel from the tower, last evening, heard what you said, knew what you wanted. But I was not quite so close as that villain, Simon Wood, whom I was watching all the time!"

"Simon Wood?"

"Yes, Miss Lizzie; he has been playing the spy upon you for some time, hiding himself away outside the main body of the tower, where you sit to look out upon the sea—and I have seen it. So, last night, I got ahead of him, and hid myself near his usual hiding-place, to see if I couldn't find out what he went there for; and I not only heard what you said, but found out that he had done so, too; and would injure you and those you love, if it came in his power. So, after you had gone and he had followed, I slipped away and went to the port, and saw John Diver—the handsomest and best fisherman that ever lived, if I do say it—and got him to go off to the schooner, and pilot her into a little cove not far from here, which is known to very few people, and used to be visited only by smugglers!"

"Why Jennie, what do you mean?"

"Just what I say, Miss Lizzie! If you doubt me, read this letter from Captain Seawail!" and Jennie drew the missive from her bosom, and handed it to her mistress.

"You needn't look disappointed, Miss Venona," said the girl, with a mischievous smile. "Mr. Morley is well, and sent his love to you. 'Twas as much as I could do to keep 'em from coming directly along with me! I never saw two young men quite so deep in love!"

"The letter is indeed from Seawail, and the schooner is at anchor, and in present safety. O Jennie, how shall I reward you?" cried Lizzie.

"I think I'm pretty well paid already, Miss Lizzie," said Jennie, displaying the purse of gold which Seawail had given to her. "He gave my John one just like it," she added.

"Oh! gold will never repay the half I owe you, Jennie," said Lizzie. "You have lifted a terrible weight from my heart. All the night long, the wind has been blowing a gale, growing higher and higher, and wilder and wilder, directly upon the coast, and I feared that the vessel would be wrecked. Now they are safe, and there's not a thing on earth which you'd ask of me, that I'd refuse you!"

"Well, Miss Lizzie, just to please you, I'll ask one very great favor," said Jennie, her bright eyes twinkling more merrily than ever.

"Name it, my good girl—it is granted before you ask it!"

"Then, Miss Lizzie, please let Captain Seawail kiss me just once, after he has kissed you—as I know he will when he sees you. I want to be kissed once by a real gentleman, just to see if it feels different from being kissed by common folks!"

"You shall have twenty kisses from him without any objection on my part," said Lizzie, laughing.

"And you may have fifty from Mr. Morley," said Venona, laughing also.

"I don't care about any from him. He isn't near so handsome as the captain," said Jennie, demurely. "He hasn't got any whiskers!"

"And he didn't give you a purse of gold, eh, Jennie?"

"Oh! Miss Venona—I'm not so mean as to value a man for what he gives me! But to speak truly, he is a very nice, handsome young man; and when his whiskers grow out like the captain's, he will be very pretty, I am sure! But I think I had better go off to my own room now, and tumble up my bed a bit, so that none of the rest of the girls, if they go in my room, will see that I've been out. And then, as soon after daylight as I can get a good chance, and not be watched by that mouse-cat,

Mr. Simon Wood, I'll see you again, and we'll form some plan for you to see your lovers with out danger to them or you. I expect he'll be mousing about this morning; but I'll get him in a meal-tub, if he don't look out!"

"I think we had better follow her example, Venona; and if we can, get a couple of hours' sleep, or we shall look any way but interesting when we meet them," said Lizzie, as Jenny went away.

"I am of your mind, Lizzie; but I fear that little sleep will visit our eyelids this morning. I am so happy that they are safe!"

"Bless that noble, thoughtful girl! She shall never be forgotten!" said Lizzie.

"I wonder if Seawaif will appreciate her desire for a kiss from 'a real gentleman,' and gratify her?"

"Certainly! she is a very pretty girl; and the gentleman who would refuse a kiss to a pretty girl ought to be banished to Spitzbergen! By the way, Jenny admires whiskers, it seems!"

"What true woman does not? Why, a smooth face marks a milk-and-waterish heart, and Morley will be sure to have a splendid pair as soon as he is old enough. He is very young yet!"

"Not too young to love and be loved, sweet coz!" said Lizzie, smiling.

"No—love keeps no account of time—does not measure his feelings by the calendar. If he did, there would be no earthly chance left for those unfortunates called old maids and old bachelors!"

"Unfortunates? Rather call them criminals, for living single in a world so full of love as this is!" said Lizzie, laughing, while she made preparations to retire.

"Why—what an hour to go to bed! Day is actually dawning!" said Venona.

"So it is—nevertheless, it is necessary that we should give our bed the appearance of having slept in it, as Jenny is going to do with hers!"

CHAPTER LXXXII.

At the very first glimpse of dawn, Simon Wood, with a spy-glass in his hand, stood upon a point of the castle wall, from which he could get a view of the sea for many leagues, and also look down into the harbor and upon the village. But from no point inside of the castle walls could the cove be seen where the schooner had been anchored.

Far as the eye could reach, seaward, only a wild, tumultuous mass of waters was in view. The gale, still fresh, though not so high as it had been, had lashed the ocean into a fearful rage. Its great, topping waves, crested with foam, came tumbling in toward the coast as if they would overwhelm it; and, there, striking the huge, rocky cliffs, sent up their angry breath in clouds of spray, and fell back in great drifts of foam. Not a sail could be seen far or near, not a strange vessel was in the harbor, nothing in sight at the village denoted anything of an exciting or unusual nature.

"It is strange! She must have worked off to sea to avoid the danger of a lee shore. Yet with a pilot on board, she could have come into the harbor last night, I should think!" muttered Wood, with a disappointed air. "I'll go down to the village, at any rate, and see if John Diver has returned, or been heard of!"

The agent, having formed this resolution, he hastened to put it in execution.

The very first person whom he met, as he passed the cottage of Hannock, where Diver boarded, was John himself—looking, with his tumbled hair, and jacket on his arm, as if he had just turned out of bed.

"It's a very nice, clear morning, after the blow last night, Master Diver," said the agent—in a tone meant to be very friendly and condescending.

"Any fool might see that without giving himself the trouble to ask you to tell him so, Mr. Simon Wood," said John, gruffly.

"Why, what is the matter, Master Diver? Have you got up cross this morning?—or perhaps you haven't been to bed at all?" said the agent, still kindly—for he sought anything but a quarrel with the fisherman just then. He wanted news from him.

"I don't know as it's any of your business, Simon Wood!"

"Oh, pooh—you're testy this morning. A glass of good rum will put you in a good humor—come and take one, at my expense—I see they're opening at the Jolly Tar!"

"When I want a drink, I'm able to pay for

it; and if I weren't, I'd go dry till doomsday, before I'd let you pay for what passed my lips!"

"Why, you're in a terrible humor this morning. I'd like to know how I have crossed you, to receive such treatment as this!"

"You haven't crossed me directly, Simon Wood—if you had, I should have choked your luff long ago. But you have wronged my friends, insulted them that I love; and you are generally a mean, dirty, low conniving scoundrel. The further you are away from me, the better I feel. You smell bad to me, you look bad, you are bad—and you know it!"

"Very well, Master John Diver—very well, sir! If you will quarrel, why quarrel let it be!" cried Wood, now thoroughly enraged. "Perhaps you'll know to your cost, who it is that you are trifling with!"

"Perhaps you'll know how a broken head feels, if you go to threatening me, Simon Wood. I know you, from stem to stern, from truck to keelson; and you're as rotten a craft as ever stood on two legs. You're not fit for crab-bait—if you were to drown, the eels would wriggle their tails and swim away from you, you're so pison!"

"Where did you go with your boat, last night?" asked Wood, almost choking with rage.

"None of your business!" replied the fisherman.

"I'll make it my business. You probably went off to some smuggler, or went into some mischief! If the vessel you went to had been on an honest errand, she would have been in the harbor now; for you could have brought her in as easily as not, with a fair wind—far easier than she could work off in such a gale!"

"What do you—the remnant of a bloody red-back—know about vessels and gales?" said John, contemptuously, and he passed on toward the "Jolly Tar."

"That scoundrel is deceiving me; but how, I cannot tell! Can it be possible, that Miss Egerton can have arranged with him previously to take a message off to an expected schooner, if one came and made signal? It must be so!" muttered Wood. "But how to find out, is the question. Let me think—this fellow has been courting pretty Jennie Rollison, whom I had picked out as a pigeon for my own picking before magnificent Venona Dorset came on the carpet. She must know the secret, and they say women can't keep secrets. I'll test her; and if gold can't get it out of her, fear shall!"

And, Mr. Wood, with this idea in his mind, returned to the castle.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

When day-dawn came to the schooner, it found Seawaif and his officers, as well as most of the crew, on deck; for it was but natural that they should desire to see into what kind of a place they had been brought in the night—the more especially that they were within the bounds of the enemy's country, and not upon neutral ground, as they had been at or near Matanzas.

They found that they were in a small semi-circular or half-moon-like bay, with narrow entrances, or outlets, at either ends, and protected in the centre by a huge and lofty cliff, so like the remaining line of coast, that from a short distance outside, no sign of a break or harbor could be seen. Inside, the cliffs were almost as perpendicular and inaccessible—presenting only here and there a few platforms beneath the overhanging rocks, where men could find a footing. Above, all was bleak and drear, not a sign of a human habitation, or the mark of man's hand could be seen. As the spot where the pilot and Jennie were landed could not be seen from the deck, and he had represented that there was the only passable pathway from above, it was deemed best by Seawaif to keep a boat there continually, and also to station an officer and a guard there, to prevent the possibility of surprise. The boat was to bring any visitor who came from the castle, on board.

Mr. Doolittle at once volunteered to command this guard, perhaps because he hoped thereby to get another glance at the pretty Jennie; but the captain represented that it would do just as well to place a subaltern officer there, and Mr. Doolittle was disappointed in his wish.

"I sink I should like to go to ze shore, and zere to stretch my legs," said the doctor, as he glanced at the platform before alluded to.

"No need o' stretchin' them—they're long

enough now, and almost as thin as a pair of pipe-stems," said Mr. Doolittle, spitefully, wishing to vent his ill humor on some one.

"Monsieur Doolittle, ze comparison you make between my leg and ze stem-pipes will not prove itself true. If you do not believe zat, I will demonstrate heem for you! Suppose I strike you wiz one pipe-stem, so—and it break!" and he broke the stem of a clay pipe, which he was smoking, over the shoulder of the lieutenant. "But now observe, if you please, I kick you very hard wiz my leg, and it do not break!"

And suiting the action to the word, the doctor planted so heavy a kick in that portion of the body where kicks usually are bestowed, that Mr. Doolittle was actually lifted from the deck.

Fortunately, the captain interfered just at this moment, or something serious would have happened; for Doolittle, almost blind with rage, snatched a boarding-axe from its becket, and would have used it, perhaps fatally, upon the unarmed doctor.

"Mr. Doolittle, I shall never take the trouble to remind you a third time, that there must be no quarreling on the quarter-deck of this vessel!" said he, sternly.

"Did you see him kick me, cap'n?"

"Yes, sir; and also heard the uncalled-for and insulting remark which caused him to do it!" said Seawaif, sternly. "Although I do not justify him in using violence on the quarter-deck, I do not blame him for resenting an indignity!"

"Capitaine, I apologize to your quarter-deck, many times. I only wish to demonstrate to Monsieur Doolittle, zat he was mistake in his comparison. If I 'ave so done to his satisfaction, I am very much content. If not, and he shall desire more exercise, I shall be very much more content if you will permit him to go wiz me to stretch our legs on ze shore!"

Seawaif could scarcely repress a smile at this proposition of the doctor's, and the manner in which he delivered it; but he replied:

"You can go on shore if you wish, doctor, understanding that you are not to go beyond that cliff there; but I have duty on board, for Mr. Doolittle!"

"I am not to go beyond ze cleef?" said the doctor, looking comically at the impassable precipices of the mountain. "Wizout I 'ave wings like ze eagle, or pinions like one angel, I sink I shall not go beyond ze cleef! Ze goat could not climb zere—if Monsieur le General Wolfe had such a precipice as zat to climb at Quebec, I sink zat he and General Montcalm would not now be dead. I will not go beyond ze cleef, capitaine, I extend to you my honare zat I will not!"

And with this, the doctor entered the boat which was about going to the shore, taking with him a small bottle of *cau de vie* as a companion.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

When Simon Wood returned to the castle from the village, he had arranged his plan fully for a cunning cross-examination of Jennie Rollison. He knew that he had a keen wit to contend with, but being confident that it was difficult for a woman to keep a secret—and determined to use both gold and power to obtain it, he felt almost sure that he would succeed.

So, while taking his breakfast in his room, as he usually did, alone, he bade the servant tell Jennie that he wanted to see her a moment; and, he added, to the man, "when she comes you can leave the room. I wish to see her alone."

No one, to see the fresh and rosy cheeks of Jennie—her bright and fearless eyes, and her neat figure, apparelled with so much care—would for an instant have dreamed that she had passed a sleepless night, one of excitement as well as peril. Fresh from her ablutions and dressing-table, she looked as if she had passed a happy and dreamy night.

"Take a seat, my pretty Miss Jenny! Why, how sweet and fresh you look this morning—on my word, you grow more and more charming every day!" said the agent, with a very grim attempt at a winning smile on his pale face.

"I supposed you wanted to see me on some business, sir! I can hear compliments elsewhere, and from those I like better than you!" said the brave girl, with an indignant toss of her head, which shook her ringlets like a shower of honeysuckles over her white neck.

"Ah! now don't be pettish, my dear Jennie," said he, in a soothing tone. "You know that I think a great deal of you!"

"When it is to your *interest* you may say so, but you *like* nothing but your own mean, miserable, ugly self! If you have *business* with me, say so—if not, I will go back to my father, who is waiting at breakfast for me!"

"Well, sit down, Jennie, sit down, and I will tell you what I sent for you for!"

She took a chair, and placing it quite a distance from him, sat down.

"You was very sly, my dear, when you went down to see John Diver, last night, with a message from your mistress," said he.

He had spoken utterly at random; but a nervous start which she could not quite suppress, and a change of color, told him that he had hit somewhere near the mark. But in a second she recovered her self-possession, and seeing through his plan of examination, replied:

"I did *not* bear any message from my mistress to John Diver, last night, sir!"

"Oh, of *course* not. You called him out from the 'Jolly Tar' on your *own* account entirely, I suppose," said he, carelessly, as if he *knew* she had been the one who had been seen to speak to him.

She made no reply to this; but rising, said:

"Is this all the business you have with me?"

"Not all—not all, my dear Miss Jennie. Do you see this purse?"

"I am not blind, sir," she answered.

"Well, Jennie, there are five guineas in it!"

"Indeed?"

"Yes, and by just honestly answering *one* question, you can be the owner of them!"

"Well, sir, first put your question, and then I'll consider whether it is best for me to answer it!"

Well, Jennie, tell me what message your mistress sent off to that schooner by John Diver, last night!"

A new plan of operations in a second flashed across the fertile mind of the young girl. Fixing her eyes upon the purse, more to conceal her true thoughts than anything else, she seemed to study whether she should respond to the question or not.

The agent's keen eyes flashed with the thought of coming triumph.

"Should I tell you, will you promise me never to say a word to John Diver or my mistress, and to hold him harmless in every way?" she said at last, hesitatingly, but with her eyes fixed on the purse, as if there lay the reason of her yielding.

"Yes; I will not only promise that, but I will do more. I will please John by giving his friend and partner, Haddock, a year's rent free, of the cottage he lives in."

"No—don't do that, Mr. Wood, or John would suspect me. But write out your promise to hold him harmless, and then—then perhaps I'll tell you what you wish!"

With eager haste the agent wrote what she desired, and handed her the paper. She read it and placed it in her bosom; and then reaching her hand for the purse, asked permission to count the money.

"It is all right," said Wood, more and more eager as he felt more sure of learning what he sought to know.

"Yes," said Jennie, putting the purse in her pocket. "Well, Mr. Wood, since I've taken the money, I s'pose I *must* tell. It was *me* who went down and sent John Diver off to the schooner; and I gave him a letter from Miss Lizzie to her lover, the captain of that schooner!"

"What is his name?" asked Wood, excitedly.

"I forget now—he is an officer in the royal navy, a lord something or other—on my word, I forget. But I can find out when he comes again—he is to come again in one month from last night!"

"How do you know that?"

"Oh, John brought word to my mistress, before day, this morning!"

"The rascal! How close he was this morning. I could get nothing out of him!"

"Oh! sir, do be careful not to hint to *him* what I have told you—nor to my mistress, either. It would be my ruin if you did!"

"Don't fear, Jennie—don't fear. But you have not told me all. Miss Venona Dorset also has a lover on board that schooner!"

"Yes, sir—I believe she has!"

"Did she not also send and receive a letter?"

"Yes, sir—she did. You seem to know everything. There is no use in my trying to conceal anything from *you*!"

"That is true, Jennie. And now that you have acted so well in this matter, I feel inclined to be generous with you, and employ you further. Can you not manage to get the letters which John brought to the ladies, from them, for me?"

"I can try, sir!"

"And also listen and learn what their plans and arrangements are, and let me know all the time. They confide in you, it seems, and you can keep me constantly informed of their manoeuvres and intentions!"

"So I can, sir!"

"Do it, then, Jennie, and I will reward you *liberally*!"

"Yes, sir—and if you'll not take it amiss, sir, you can help me by doing one thing!"

"What is it, my dear?"

"If you please, sir, seem to be very angry with me, and with them also. Don't come around them any more, or seem to watch their actions at all, or follow them when they go out; but leave *all* to me, and I'll let you know of every step which they take, and every thought that they utter!"

"Your plan is good, Jennie, and I will follow it. I'll keep myself close over my accounts in the castle, and you can let me know every day of anything new which occurs!"

"Haden't you better pretend to be sick, sir? Then they would be twice as bold and careless, and I should be sure to learn all that you desire to know. It will not be hard for you to keep your room for a few days, I am sure!"

"No—I like your plan again, Jennie, and will follow it—commencing this morning. I begin to feel sick already."

"Then, sir, I'll bid you good morning—fear not but that I'll do my part!"

And Jennie left the room, Mr. Simon Wood being fully satisfied that he had extorted "the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" from her, and secured her to his future service.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

"O Miss Lizzie—Miss Lizzie, I have had such fun!" cried Jennie, a few moments after she had left the room of Simon Wood, entering the apartment where Miss Egerton and Venona were busy in perfecting their morning toilet. "That old mouse-cat, Simon Wood, has been trying to find out what I and John Diver were doing last night. He gave me five guineas and a writing to hold John harmless in *all* things; and I told him—"

"What, Jennie? You surely have not betrayed us!"

"Oh, yes, I *have*, Miss Lizzie! The five guineas were *such* a temptation; and then Simon called me his dear, and looked so loving. He would have won an angel over to commit sin, and turned butter milk into *sweet* cream again! Those little black eyes of his, glittered like glow-worms in a bag!"

"What did you tell him? You may have ruined us!"

"I expect I have, Miss Lizzie! But the temptation! Why the old fox means to marry me, and he has saved up a mint of money out of his stealings from your uncle."

"Jennie—don't you see that I am getting angry? Tell me the worst at once."

"Well, Miss Lizzie, I told him that you sent me with a message and a couple of letters to John Diver. That he, the *said* John, as the squire used to say, was to take the letters off to the schooner, to your lovers there—"

"O Jennie—Jennie, what have you done?"

"Don't interrupt me, if you please, Miss Lizzie, till I make a full confession to *you*, as I did to *him*. John was to take the letters off to the lovers of you two young ladies—who were officers of high rank in the royal navy—and in one month from last night, they were to come again, and carry you both off!"

"O you witch—I see now. You have been putting him on the wrong track!"

"Don't interrupt me, please, Miss Lizzie. I haven't told you yet, half of my wickedness. I have agreed, for certain golden considerations, to play the spy upon you—to watch every step you take—to listen to your talk, steal the letters you have received, and keep old mouse-trap constantly posted on everything you do. And rest assured, I *shall*—he shall know to an ounce how much pomatum you put on your hair, and how much pearl powder there is on your white necks. In the mean time, I have persuaded him to leave the field *entirely* to me; and he is so fully convinced of my faithfulness to his interest, that he is going to *sham* sick, and remain in his room, on

lemonade and gruel, while I watch you! Now am I not a very, *very* wicked girl?"

"You are the best-hearted, quickest-witted, *dearest* creature in the world!" cried Lizzie; and in the exuberance of her joy, she clasped the plump girl in her arms, and kissed her again and again.

"Don't, Miss Lizzie—*don't*," said Jennie, with well-assumed confusion. "I'm not used to being *kissed*."

And extricating herself from Lizzie's arms, she stood with the forefinger of her right hand in the corner of her mouth, and twisting up her apron with her left hand, looking so irresistibly comical and mockingly bashful, that both of the young ladies burst into almost uncontrollable laughter.

"How now—how now!" cried Sir Humphrey, taking a father's liberty to enter the young ladies' dressing-room. "What's set you both a gallop this morning so early, blossoms?"

"Oh, nothing much, father, we are merely laughing for our health—taking *cachinatory* exercise, that we may become fat like *yourself*," said Venona.

"Fat like *me*? You two girls would look fine if you were as fat as I am. If you were in the market then, you'd go by your weight, and not by your looks. But that wasn't what I came for—haven't you got something good for the headache, blossom?"

"For the headache, father?"

"Yes, for the headache, child. I drank some of the *blessedest* best punch, which Simon Wood brewed for me, last night, that I ever tasted, and I believe it laid me under the table. At any rate, I have the *worst* headache this morning that I ever felt. I've three bee-hives and a mill-dam in my head at least, this morning, by the feeling of it."

"Drinking punch with Mr. Wood was you? Did he drink with you?" asked Lizzie.

"Oh! yes, like a *man*! And told stories while I smoked and drank, and had a jolly time generally."

"This is the first time he has done so, is it not?"

"Yes, blossom; but what of that? I knew he'd come into my way when he'd seen how happy I was. The force of example is everything."

"Didn't he have a good many questions to ask you?"

"Some, it seems to me. Let me think—I believe he said you'd seen a schooner off the coast, last night—I remember something about it; but I was rather drowsy when he told me of it. Did you see one, blossoms?"

"There was some kind of a vessel off the coast, last night; but she is nowhere in sight this morning," said Lizzie.

"Sit down, father, and let me bathe your head with some of this *aqua ammonia*—shut your eyes, and don't snuff up any of it, or it may set you to dancing."

The baronet obeyed directions, and in a short time felt decidedly better; and by the time that the ladies were prepared for breakfast, he felt ready to accompany them.

Jennie had left the room when he entered, and was now with her good old father, who loved her quite as well as the baronet did his daughter.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

"Where is Mr. Wood this morning?" asked the baronet of the personal servant who usually waited on the agent, after Sir Humphrey had finished his breakfast.

"He is quite unwell, sir—too sick to leave his room," said the man, who had already received his instructions from the agent.

"So—so! He hasn't quite so old a head as mine on his shoulders—isn't quite so stiff below! He can't stand his grog so well. The punch was too much for him, I expect. Well—tell him the hair of the dog cures the bite. If he wants to feel better and get quite sober, tell him to take enough toddy this morning to put him half way over the bay, and he'll soon feel all right as a six-year old in pasture!"

And the baronet returned to the sitting-room where the ladies were. They were busily engaged with Jennie, about something or other. But whatever it was, they evidently meant it for a secret, for they stopped talking when the baronet came in, and Jennie hurried out of the room.

"How does your head feel now, dear father?" asked Venona.

"Oh, better, blossom—better!"

"Haden't you better go to bed for a little while? A little repose will do you good!"

"D'ye think so, blossom—d'ye think so?"

"Yes, father!"

"Well, maybe 'twill—maybe 'twill! The best joke out is, that Simon Wood is sick abed this morning! He couldn't stand his own punch—poor fellow! couldn't stand his own punch!" And he laughed heartily. "But what are you going to do? I see Lizzie has put her hat and shawl on, and has yours in her hand."

"Oh! we're going to take a little walk, as we usually do in the mornings, father."

"Haden't I better go along, blossom?"

"I think not, father. Rest will help your head the most. We are only going to take a little run out, and will soon be back. Let me fix a place on this sofa here by the window, where the fresh air will come in. Wait a moment, and I will bring pillows, and fix you comfortably!"

And Venona hurried away for them.

"What a blessed blossom she is," said the happy old man, as he looked fondly upon her receding form.

She soon returned; and having prepared the sofa for him, and persuaded him to lie down, she kissed his hot brow, and then joined Lizzie, who was waiting for her at the door.

"I was so afraid that he would insist upon joining us, as usual, that I hardly knew what to do," said Venona. "But he is settled for an hour or two, I think."

And the two sweet girls went out arm in arm from the castle, for a walk, unattended, as they so often did, that they would not attract any particular attention.

Passing through the gate, they went around by a narrow foot-path to the west of the castle; and after they had got out of sight, hastened along into a dense grove, which extended for some way along down the coast, at first upon a path, and then, under the guidance of Lizzie, who knew the ground well, striking off to the right, into the thickest and roughest part of the tangled forest.

"How does your heart feel, Venona?" asked Lizzie, as they paused to take breath, after some ten or fifteen minutes walk.

"It beats so loud that I should think you could hear it," said the other.

"And mine, too, is thumping like a drummer after recruits," said Lizzie. "But come on coz—it is yet a quarter of a mile to the spot where Jennie is to meet us."

Now, Lizzie didn't say that any one was to meet her and Venona, besides Jennie—yet her heart never would have thumped away in her bosom at that rate, if she had been only going to meet the butler's daughter.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

Morley and Seawaif were standing aft on the quarter-deck, with their heads in very close proximity, conversing in a low tone upon some subject which seemed to engross their entire attention, for they did not notice what was amusing the crew very much—the antics of the doctor, who was taking a course of gymnastic exercises, upon one of the ledges or platforms of rock, which we spoke of in our brief description of the bay. At one moment he would try the extent of his powers in jumping—then he would dance all the steps of a minuet—then he would walk upon his hands, with his head thrown forward like that of a chicken suspended by the feet, while his long legs hung loosely down over his back like limbs of India-rubber.

The first thing which drew the attention of Seawaif and his young officer was the exclamation of Mr. Doolittle, who had been leaning sulkily against the quarter-hammock rail, ever since the doctor went ashore, looking anywhere but at the latter.

"Jerusalem! there comes that purty red headed gal agin!" said Mr. Doolittle.

And as the officers looked in the direction which occupied his attention, they saw the boat which had been sent on shore, coming off with Jennie Rollison in the stern-sheets.

Both of them went to the gangway to receive her, and then escorted her into the cabin with far more deference than she would have received, had she been an ambassadress from the King of England.

Mr. Doolittle made an instant excuse to go into the cabin also. The face of Seawaif darkened as he saw him, and he said:

"Mr. Doolittle, you will do me the favor to take a spy-glass and go up to the fore-top-gallant cross-trees, and look carefully in every direction to see if you can see a sail in sight. You will please remain there until I call you

down, for I may have some more questions to ask while you are aloft!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" said Doolittle, very sulkily, for he knew precisely what he was sent aloft for—his company was not required in the cabin.

"I know them two is each in love with a gal, and that their gals are ashore here somewhere!" muttered Doolittle, as he left the cabin. "And I can't see why they should be so tarnation selfish and all-fired mean as to want to monopolize this one, too! I know she's 'taken' with me, by the way she looked and laughed when I saw her first. And if I only had a chance, maybe she wouldn't give me the mitten, like Kate Cringle did! By jockey, they hadn't better make me much madder than I am, or I'll spoil the fun with their gals for 'em! I'll be swiggered if I'm goin' to be kicked by a frog-eatin' Frenchman, cheated out of a chance to even talk to a pretty gal, and be treated like a mangy dog generally, without having some satisfaction! Darn my buttons, if I'll stand it! That's said, and just as good as if 'twas sworn to!"

Mr. Doolittle having procured a glass, now slowly mounted the fore-rigging, and had but just reached the cross-trees when Seawaif and Morley came out of the cabin with Jennie; and entering the boat which had brought her to the vessel, it was pushed from the schooner's side, and steered toward the landing.

"I say, cap'n! I see *nothin'* from up here!" cried Mr. Doolittle, not liking the idea of remaining up there while the captain went on shore, nor yet liking to risk his anger by coming down without orders.

"Keep your eye on it, then, sir!" said Seawaif, and in a minute more the boat had rounded the point of rocks, and was out of sight.

"Well, I swear! This is enough to make a feller swell at his grandmother!" said the mate, and sitting down on the cross-trees, he turned his glass landward, toward the lofty, chalky cliffs, covered with a stunted growth of trees; but looking too barren and dismal to invite a desire for a nearer inspection.

But while Mr. Doolittle looked in that direction, he saw something which made his eyes dance and twinkle like a couple of duck's eggs in a kettle of boiling water.

"By jingo—I see calico a flutterin' through them scrubby bushes!" he muttered. "There's two on 'em by mighty! I wonder if them is the gals the cap'n and Morley is goin' to see. I reckon the cap'n 'll wish he hadn't sent me up here now! By hokey, I don't want to go down now—gee up and go 'long, crack your whips, I'm in clover now! I reckon I ain't keepin' my eye on *nothin'* now!"

Mr. Doolittle felt so good, that had he been on deck, he would have danced—as it was, he hunched up and down on the cross-trees, and shook his lanky legs about, as if he couldn't keep them still.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

It was two hours or more before the boat returned with Seawaif and Morley in it; and yet Mr. Doolittle had remained at the mast-head all that time, without evincing the slightest wish to come down.

When Seawaif came on board and saw him, he felt a regret that he had been so severe with him; and calling him down, told him as much.

"Oh, you needn't feel bad, cap'n; I was very comfortable up there! I was taking observations!"

And the lieutenant looked so "knowing," as he said this, glancing shoreward, that Seawaif looked up at the mast-head, and seemed instantly to compare its altitude with certain localities on shore. Whatever may have been the mental result of his comparison, he said nothing more to Mr. Doolittle; but turned to the doctor, who had come on board during his absence, and asked how he had enjoyed his visit to the shore.

"Ah, I was very much delight, mon cher capitaine!" replied the doctor. "I exercise myself in several position—I stretch my legs, and my arms, and my body; everyting I stretch except my neck!"

"The hangman'll do that, some day!" muttered Mr. Doolittle; but he was very careful to say it in such a low tone, that it did not reach the ears of the doctor, or he undoubtedly would have received the benefit of another "demonstration" of the meaning of "kick."

"How do you like the looks of things here-away?" asked the captain.

"Ah, sare, zey look very firm—but not very fruitful."

"Not quite so beautiful as Cuban scenery?"

"No, sare; but far less *dangereuse*! I 'ave not observe here any snakes."

And the doctor shrugged up his shoulders, and shuddered, as he always did when he thought of his snake adventure in the Rio Canima.

"How long, if you please, capitaine, will we remain in zis place?" continued the doctor.

"Not a great while, I think. We will rest the men a little, refit our rigging, and set it up, and then again skim the sea in search of glory and prize-money. But why do you ask? Do you anticipate a dull time while we remain?"

"Oh, no, messieur le capitaine, I am nevare dull. But if you were to permit your mens to go on ze shore and climb among zem rocks, I sink in a very leetel while I should 'ave ze pleasure of amputat somesing, or at ze least to repair some broken bones."

The steward now having announced dinner to be ready, the officers adjourned to the cabin. The crew had been piped to dinner already.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

After dinner, Seawaif came on deck again, accompanied by Morley; and giving him an intelligent glance, said:

"I think I'll take another stroll on shore, Morley. I wish, without its being noticed by Doolittle, that you would convey my Swiss chamois hunting-rifle into the boat. Do it directly, while I occupy his attention forward in examining the gammoning of the bowsprit, which may have been strained during the late heavy weather."

Morley looked his assent, for Doolittle came up at that moment, and he could not reply.

"Mr. Doolittle, come forward with me a moment!" said Seawaif. "I think the gammoning on the bowsprit wants overhauling, and most likely the head-stays need setting up. The heavy weather we've had of late must have stretched them."

"It mought be so!" said Mr. Doolittle, who was picking his teeth with a straw, which he had pulled from the cabin broom.

And while he went forward with the captain, Morley stepped into the cabin, and brought out one of those short rifles of large bore used by the Germans and Swiss, which carry to an immense distance, and though not so accurate as the American rifle, are deadly at a much greater range. This he concealed in the boat alongside, with its ammunition, and then he went forward to where the captain and Doolittle were standing, while the boatswain and his mates ripped the cover from over the gammoning.

Seawaif knew from his look that he had done that which he had bidden him do; and after he had seen that the work which he required done was underway, he said to him:

"I think I'll take another run ashore, Mr. Morley, and reconnoitre. We must be very careful while here to guard from a surprise! Would you like to accompany me?"

"If you please, sir!" said the young officer.

"Well, have the boat manned, and we'll land!" said the commander.

This was done; and in a few moments the boat was on its way to the shore.

"They think they're *cute* now!" muttered Mr. Doolittle to himself, after they were gone. "Think they're *real* cunnin'!"

And he took a huge bite of tobacco from a pig-tail twist.

"The cap'n sent me aloft for his pleasure this mornin'—now, I guess I'll take a turn up here to please myself. I reckon I can reconnoitre a little on my own hook. I ain't quite such a scaramouch as they take me to be! Love-makin' is all mighty nice for them that's into it, but it's cruel aggravatin' to them that isn't. It's worse than a hungry man lookin' at vittels that ain't his, and he can't beg nor buy—worse than being poor and havin' to handle other folks' money. But all this isn't here nor there. I'm goin' aloft agin, to see if I can't get a squint at calico once more."

The lieutenant now provided himself as before with a spy-glass, and going aloft deliberately, perched himself again upon the fore-top-gallant cross-trees, and adjusting the glass to a proper focus, began to look in the same direction to which his attention had been formerly directed.

For several minutes he looked, but no change came over his countenance, to indi-

that he saw anything that looked like calico. But after he had been perched there fifteen or twenty minutes, a broad grin displayed itself on the full moon of his face, and he said:

"I see 'em—the two gals is a comin', and I reckon the men is somewhere nigh."

Just as he said this, the unmistakable and very startling sound of a bullet, whistling close by his head, caused Mr. Doolittle to drop his spy-glass to the deck, and very nearly to fall himself from the cross-trees. Not that he was exactly a coward—for he was not; but it came so suddenly and unexpectedly, that it would have scared the best man that ever smelt powder.

As he clutched the royal-mast back-stays to steady himself, Mr. Doolittle looked toward the shore again, and saw a little puff of smoke rising from a clump of bushes there.

"I wonder who on airth is a shootin' so devilish careless from there?" he muttered. "If it's the enemy, and a doin' on it a purpose, I reckon the cap'n and second luff will be captivated worser than they be by the women folks. And if that's the case, then I'm cap'n! Whew—if that is so, I'll captivate that 'ere red-headed gal, and make matrimony the price of her freedom—then I'll sail for hum, draw my share of prize-money, and stock a firm."

If Mr. Doolittle had any more plans fresh-grown or growing in his brain-field to reveal, he had no longer time or place for their revelation up there; for another bullet came so very close to his head, that he dodged its wind, and bumped his head severely against the top-gallant mast in so doing, while he put his hand up to feel if he hadn't been hit by the lead as well as received a bump from the spar.

"By mighty, this won't do! The roost is a little too conspicuous; and if a feller was to fall from here, 'twould be worse than the fall of Adam!" he muttered. And with commendable alacrity, he evacuated his post by catching hold of the back-stays, and sliding down to the deck, hand under hand, as speedily as possible.

"Men, you'd better take kiver!" said he to the crew. "The enemy's sharp-shooters are a pepperin' at us from the mounting up there."

"I guess they won't do us much harm, sir!" said an old tar, who had seen Mr. Morley take the rifle into the boat, and who was almost as smart as a cross-eyed man, able at any rate to look two ways for Sunday.

"Well, do jest as you like—if you git peppered, it'll be no fault of mine. I'm a goin' into the cabin to look at the chart, and see which is the nighest way to git hum!"

And Mr. Doolittle dodged into the cabin in a hurry, glancing up at the cliffs before he went in, as if he expected to receive a full volley from thence every moment.

Perhaps it is as well that we should take a look on shore to ascertain the source of Mr. Doolittle's alarm. To do it decently, we will open another chapter.

CHAPTER XC.

After Seawaif and Morley had got on shore, and passed the guard, while by a narrow path they were ascending the rocky heights, the younger officer asked the captain why he had brought the heavy rifle on shore which he was now carrying.

"To test its range, and cure a bad attack of curiosity in our first lieutenant, who, of late has been getting rather troublesome in more ways than one!" replied Seawaif, "I shall have to dispense with his services when we get into an American port again, if the fortune of war doesn't remove him 'providentially' before that time!"

"I do not understand how you are to cure his curioisty with the rifle!" said Morley, with a puzzled look.

"I will show you after we get to the top of the cliff, and near the spot where we expect to meet the ladies! You saw that Doolittle made no complaint about being left at the mast-head by me for two hours or more this morning?"

"I did, sir, and observed with surprise that he seemed rather pleased than otherwise."

"Yes, he said he had been taking 'observations.' And though I left him with duty to do on deck, he is aloft now with a spy-glass in his hand, ready to do so again."

And halting behind a clump of bushes, from which they had a plain view of the mast-heads of the schooner, the captain pointed to

Doolittle, who had just fixed himself at the cross-trees, and was leveling his glass toward the shore.

"Do you think he was looking at us when we met the ladies this morning?"

"I know he was. His triumphant look and significant language told me so when we went on board. But I said nothing then; for I made up my mind to teach him a lesson this afternoon, and I brought my rifle ashore to do it with."

"Surely you will not shoot the poor devil?" said Morley, as the captain commenced loading his rifle with the care which it required.

"No; but I'll scare him so badly that he'll never go to that mast head again while we are in this port!" said Seawaif, laughing.

The two ladies came in sight just at this moment, and by direction of the captain, Morley hastened toward them to prevent their being alarmed when he fired; and then, taking aim so as to send a ball so closely to Doolittle as he could without hitting him, discharged his gun.

It is unnecessary to describe the effect again, for we have seen it.

Immediately after the retreat of the lieutenant to the cabin, Seawaif joined the ladies, and found them laughing heartily at the manner in which he had dismounted the hero of the cross-trees.

Of course, after a few words of general courtesy, each couple found the seaward view more interesting from different "stand-points." But they remained within hailing-distance, in case of alarm.

And alarm came. Not a half-hour had passed in that "sweet converse" upon which we would never be so ungentlemanly as to intrude, when Jennie Rollison was seen hurrying toward them, with such evident signs of agitation, that they hastened to meet her.

"Oh, dear Miss Lizzie, good Mr. Captain!" she cried, breathlessly, "we are all ruined—all undone!"

"Why, what is the matter?" asked the ladies, in a breath.

"Sir Peter Parker has just come in a coach from some port where he has landed, and his first inquiry was for Miss Lizzie; and when he heard she were out walking, he sent servants in every direction to find her. I hurried on as rapidly as I could, for fear some one else would come this way and see the vessel!"

"Doing very right!" said Seawaif, who did not seem in the least agitated. "Ladies, you had better return to the castle, without you feel ready to accept our protection forever, and to embark with us for a port where we can be united by those sacred ties which no man can sever."

"We will go to the castle," said Lizzie, "but are we not to see you again?"

"Yes, surely—we will not sail without an interview."

"But your safety must not be compromised. That is the most important of all things; for, were you captured, alas! for us, poor girls."

"We will be careful about that. Jennie shall manage our meetings as hitherto. I would trust the destiny of a nation in her hands!" said Seawaif. "She plots admirably, and executes surely and safely."

"You have almost as good an opinion of her as she has of you!" said Lizzie. "By the way," she added, laughing, "I have promised her that she should have a kiss from you—she says she would like to be kissed once by 'a real gentleman,' and as this may be a last opportunity, the deed had better be done!"

"Not now, Miss Lizzie!" cried Jennie, as she saw how willing Seawaif seemed to perform the required duty. "Not now; I fear that some of the servants will find us—and—and I had rather let him kiss me some other time, when you're not looking on."

This last remark was made so archly, that not one of the party could refrain from laughing; but, as the danger of discovery was really imminent, a few parting words were hastily uttered, a promise to meet soon on both parts given, and then the parties separated—the ladies hurrying toward the castle, the officers slowly and reluctantly going the other way.

CHAPTER XCI.

The moment that Captain Seawaif reached his guard at the landing, he directed Morley himself to take charge of it, and to advance posts up the hill to such points as commanded a view of the vessel, with orders to seize and

detain any one who came to those points, excepting only a known messenger from Miss Egerton; and to give the alarm if a force approached by land, or from that lofty look-out was seen at sea.

This done, he went on board. He was met at the gangway by Mr. Doolittle, who, on being told that he was coming, had ventured out of the cabin.

"Have you seen 'em, captain?" was the first expression made by Mr. Doolittle, as he touched his cap to his commander.

"Seen who, sir?" asked Seawaif, calmly.

"Why, the inimy, sir? They've been a firin' at us!"

"Firing at this vessel, sir? You are crazy, are you not? I have been but a short distance from the vessel, and should have heard the noise of any attack made on her."

"Maybe 'twasn't a special attack on the vessel, sir—but I was up in the cross-trees, and two bullets came nigh enough to my head to make me wink. My ears ring with their un-airthly whistle yet."

"What were you doing aloft, sir? I left you to perform duty below, and to oversee the work on the bowsprit!"

"I know it, sir!" said Doolittle, confused and at a loss how to answer. "I know it, sir—but—but—darn it! I may as well tell the truth first as last, for it will come out somehow. I went up there to see how you and Mr. Morley got along with the gals that I see come there to meet you this mornin'. If I can't do no courtin' myself, I don't see as it's a hangin' matter if I happen to look on at a distance, so long as I can't hear nothin', and don't say nothin' to nobody."

"If not a hanging matter, it came very near to be a shooting matter to you, it seems!" said Seawaif, who could hardly repress a smile. "In future you will do well to restrain your curiosity, and to remain at such duty as you are placed at."

"Yes, sir—but, cap'n, have you an idea who did that shootin'?"

"Yes—I suspect that it was myself. I was firing at a target with my rifle on shore, and probably some of the balls came off this way!" said Seawaif, quietly, as he went into the cabin.

"Well, darn my buttons, if that wasn't cool! I'll bet a ginger-cake agin a bottle of spruce beer that he meant to hit me! If I was ashore, I'd swear my life on that as sure as I live!" muttered Mr. Doolittle, as he went forward to his duty.

CHAPTER XCII.

When Sir Peter Parker arrived at the castle, though he knew that his visit was unexpected, he was somewhat surprised, and not a little put out of temper, to find no one to receive him but a few of the domestics who were lounging round.

"Where is Mr. Wood?" he asked of the first servant, who appeared after his coach stopped before the main gate of the castle.

"Sick in his room, Sir Peter!" said the man, deferentially.

"And my niece, Miss Egerton—where is she?"

"Gone out to walk with Miss Dorset," was the reply.

"She here? Then where is Sir Humphrey?"

"Somewhere in the castle, Sir Peter!"

"Then go and find Miss Egerton instantly, and let her know that I have arrived."

"I will go to find her, Sir Peter. I know the direction which she usually takes when she walks for exercise," cried Jennie Rollison, who had seen his arrival, and heard his questions.

"Who are you, my pretty maid?" he asked.

"Your butler's daughter, sir," she said.

"You will find Sir Humphrey Dorset asleep on a sofa in the sitting-room, Sir Peter," she added, as she hurried away to find her young mistress, before any other servant should endanger her secret.

The naval baronet looked at her a moment, made some sailor-like remark to himself about her beauty, and then entered the castle.

"Hallo! Ship-mate ahoy!" he cried, as he saw the corpulent form of Sir Humphrey stretched out on a sofa, in the principal sitting-room. "Starboard watch on deck! Rouse out—rouse out!"

And he accompanied his words with a hearty slap upon Sir Humphrey's shoulder, which aroused the old gentleman so suddenly, that, in trying to spring up, he rolled off the sofa to the floor, falling face down. But his rotundity

and elasticity, much like that of an India-rubber ball, prevented all damage; and aided by Sir Peter, who laughed more than half his strength away, he soon got to his feet.

"Why, bless my soul, Sir Peter, is this you? Why, really, I'm glad to see you—glad indeed. When did you reach England?"

"Four days ago I anchored in the mouth of the Thames! I posted down here as soon as I could, for I felt tired of salt-water and hard usage, and thought I'd rest a bit. But what makes you so sleepy at this hour—you never used to sleep before dinner?"

"To speak truly, Sir Peter, your agent, Simon Wood—a capital fellow he is, by the way—made some of the blessedest best and densest strong punch out of a dozen or more different kind of liquors last night, and we both got 'a little over the bay,' as you used to say, on it. He is down sick to-day, and I've hardly been able to keep my eyes open a minute all day!"

"What, Sir Humphrey, did you, a baronet, condescend to get drunk with one of my servants? I'm astonished—really astonished, sir!" cried Sir Peter.

"I couldn't help it, Sir Peter—I couldn't help it; I was so lonesome, and hadn't a soul to drink with but him, and he is born genteelly, I'm sure—his very actions and language prove that! What could I do—who could I drink with?"

"You should have rigged a dummy, and drank with that, before you condescended to indulge with one who is at best no more than my servant!"

"Rigged a dummy? I'd like to know what that is, and how it's done!"

"Why, you might have put your hat in a chair opposite to you, and christened it Peter Parker, or my Lord Sunderland, or somebody else, and imagined it to be somebody. You could have drank to it and with it, doing double duty by drinking its share as well as your own!"

"Well—well! That is a new idea, Sir Peter—a new idea, indeed! But I like it! I'll put it in practice upon the very first opportunity. But now that you are here, during the short time that I shall yet enjoy your hospitality, I hope I shan't have to drink alone!"

"The 'short time' you're going to stay? Why, you don't mean to threaten to heave up your anchor just because I've come into port? That would be a pretty how-d'ye-do!"

"I have been here a long time, Sir Peter—a much longer time than I should have been, had I not been over-persuaded by Miss Lizzie not to tear my 'blossom' away from her. The two girls seem to be inseparables—I can't get 'em apart!"

"No; nor you needn't try for a while! You're in a good harbor, and you may as well lie at ease—at any rate till the Admiralty sets me afloat again! I suppose they'll do that before long, for the French are going to help the infernal Yankees, and we shall have to work and drub them again! The Yankees, too, are getting bold with repeated successes—that same devil which fooled you in Bermuda, escaped me in Matanzas Bay, after killing nearly two hundred men, and who has taken more prizes than we know of since the war began than any dozen of our own men-o'-war, has been along the coast of England cutting up his didoes—I've heard from him from a dozen different sources. If the rascal were only in our service, he'd be an admiral before he had a gray hair in his whiskers! But excuse me a little while, Sir Humphrey—I'll go and look at my agent, and then return."

"Don't rate him on account of the drinking bout last night; don't for my sake, Sir Peter," said the good-hearted baronet.

"For your sake, I will not!" said Sir Peter, as he left the room.

CHAPTER XCIII.

The commodore met Simon Wood, dressed, and apparently in the very best of health, at the door of his apartment, coming out toward him.

"How is this, sir?" said the former, sternly. "I was told that you were sick in bed, from the effect of a drunken debauch!"

"I was not sick, Sir Peter, but merely acting so, for very good reasons, which I will explain to you, and I am sure to your satisfaction, if you will come into my room!"

"Well, sir, explain, I am ready to hear you!" said the commodore, as soon as he had taken a seat in Wood's room.

"There has been something very mysterious going on of late, Sir Peter, with which, I re-

gret to say, your niece, Miss Egerton, as well as Miss Dorset, has been connected in some way—how, or how far, I have as yet been unable to learn; but my illness, or rather the pretence of it, was part of a plan which I had laid to find out. My debauch, as you were just pleased to term it, with Sir Humphrey, in which he did all the drinking, while I only pretended to do so, was also a part of my plan!"

"What is the mystery? bear a hand, and tell me; I'm in no humor for long yarns without they mean something!"

"Well, sir, night before last, there was a schooner off this port—"

"A schooner, a schooner, did you say?" cried the commodore, vehemently, interrupting the agent.

"Yes, sir—she came in sight before dark, and ran in near the harbor, where she fired two guns!"

"Did you see her? was she a large two-top-sail schooner, black in hull, with raking spars?"

"I only saw her at a great distance, sir!"

"Well, well, go on with your story, and tell it your own way!"

"I had overheard accidentally some conversation dropped by the young ladies, about some one on board of a schooner, and therefore kept a little watch. But they managed to evade my look-out, and sent a messenger off to the vessel with letters; and I am told by one whom I can trust, that the vessel is expected here again in one month from last night!"

"You have no idea of what nation the schooner was?"

"Yes, sir; the person from whom I bought the information, that a messenger had carried letters from the young ladies to their lovers on board the schooner, said, that those lovers were officers in the royal navy, and of course the schooner must be English!"

"English be hanged! She was a Yankee privateer! I'll wager my commission on it! Who was the person from whom you got your information?"

"Jennie Robinson, the butler's daughter!"

"The jade has deceived you in one thing, at least! Who was the messenger, who went off?"

"Her lover, one John Diver—a fisherman belonging to the port, and living with Hannock, one of your tenants!"

"He must be secured, and brought secretly to this room to-night. I can frighten the truth out of him. If I can't, I'll hang him for treason, without judge or jury! That jade, Jennie, has been too smart for you; but if she gets to windward of me, I'll ent her old shoes! Leave matters to me now, entirely. Keep up your ruse of being sick, and I can spend more time with you, examining your accounts. Let no hint of my knowledge of the matter escape you. Remain on the same terms with Jennie as before, and not many hours will elapse before I am at the bottom of this mystery!"

"Is Sir Humphrey and his daughter going to remain here, sir?"

"Yes, without I find that both have been connected with this treasonable correspondence with an enemy!" replied the commodore.

"But retire to your bed again, sir, and obey my instructions. I do not think any of the servants have seen you up. I will go to meet my niece and her co-conspirator, and see if I cannot play the dissembler as well as they can!"

CHAPTER XCIV.

"Why, my dear uncle, how glad I am to see you!" said Lizzie Egerton, as she met her uncle returning to the sitting-room. "Your return, though, unexpected, will be the more delightful. Poor Sir Humphrey has been dying for company!"

"Yes, Sir Peter, he will be delighted to see you!" said Venona, who had taken one of his hands while Lizzie held the other.

"I have already seen him, young ladies," said the commodore, in a very easy and pleasant manner. "But how does the time pass with you?"

"Oh, very agreeably, sir!" said Lizzie. "In the castle we read, and sing, and draw, and tease dear Sir Humphrey—outside, we walk, sometimes enjoy the chase, and always see something new in the wild and romantic scenery!"

"Yes, I suppose so! Like the old castle almost as well as Bermuda; but do not find quite so agreeable company as you found there upon one occasion!"

"Ah, uncle, you banter us! You know that here we are as secluded as hermits, almost!"

"Yes; and it is well that such treasonably disposed young ladies should be! You needn't blush so—I know all your secrets!"

Lizzie and Venona were terribly startled for an instant, for they feared that the commodore knew of the vicinity of the schooner and their lovers. But a moment's consideration brought back the color which had fled from their cheeks, for reason told them that he could not be so calm with that knowledge in his breast.

Lizzie told him, with a smile, that he was welcome to any of her secrets.

Sir Humphrey at that moment approached fortunately, to give a turn to the conversation, which was becoming embarrassing to the poor girls.

"How did you find your agent, Sir Peter?" he asked.

"Rather under the weather—rather down in the mouth! You used him hardly, my good friend—you were too much for him."

"He hadn't ballast enough below, as you sailors say, to stand up under a press of liquor!" said Sir Humphrey. "But he'll soon come round—a little of the stuff that made him sick will set him on his feet again!"

"His head will the sooner become clear enough to render me his accounts, as he will have to do, by letting it alone!" said the commodore.

"Well, it may; but, for my part, I must say, that the poison has to work its own cure with me. I must visit your side-board, Sir Peter, before I can get fairly woke up!"

"Well, heave ahead, my hearty! I'll stand in alongside of you, and freshen the nip, myself. It is about time that you young ladies were dressing for dinner. If it isn't ready soon, I'll have the cook at the gangway; for I'm as hungry as a Feejee Islander after man-meat!"

"Do you think your uncle suspects anything?" asked Venona of Lizzie, as Sir Peter went with the other baronet to the refreshment room.

"No—I think not! From his first remark I did, and was terribly frightened; but I know his terrible temper too well to think he could be aware of the near presence of those whom we have just left, and keep so cool as he is. I don't believe Wood has told even what Jennie told him; if he has, why uncle is just as much in the dark as that villain himself!"

"Yes, if he believes her story! But he will not be so easily blinded as Master Simon!"

"Well, things must take their own way! Seawolf is on his guard, and can go to sea at the first sign of danger. If it were not that I, who am the rightful owner of so much property, did not wish to go to him empty-handed, I would go with him as his bride without an hour's delay. For he is all that my heart ever pictured that is manly, true-hearted, good, generous, and noble!"

"Each quality you name is also inherent in Morley's nature; and did I not fear it would break my poor, fond father's heart to lose me, I would not hesitate to become Eugene's wife, did I not own a farthing in the world!" said Venona.

"Alas! I have no father, nor yet a mother, to claim my love or make me hesitate! Both died when I was too young to appreciate them—mother, before my mind had strength enough for memory to take root in it. I remember my father—a sad, stern man—who, they say, ever grieved for the loss of his first wife and babe, and in the second found but little joy to take away the memory of the loved and lost ones; but even of him my memory is dim and vague!"

"Do you not think your uncle would feel your loss?"

"No—not in his heart. He has been heart-hardened in the service; but he would feel his pride shaken if I tore myself away from the authority of his guardianship. But, coz, it is time, as he said, that we were dressing for dinner!"

"Yes—I will go with you in one moment. How will we manage to see them without arousing the suspicions of your uncle?"

"I don't know. Our good Jennie must manage that. She is a perfect jewel, isn't she?"

"Yes; as well versed in the art of intrigue, I should think, as if she had been brought up in attendance in a court, instead of being a simple butler's daughter, in a gloomy old pile like this!"

And thus conversing, the young ladies left

the apartment, to proceed to their dressing-room.

CHAPTER XCV.

Sir Peter Parker, to veil even a suspicion upon the part of the girls that he knew anything about their acts, or of a schooner having been off the coast, had been unusually pleasant and conversative with them, and after they had left the table, he sat a long time, seeming to drink more than usually free, to the intense delight of Sir Humphrey, who was now perfectly happy. Bumper after bumper of generous wine rolled down the well-worn channel of his throat—he volunteered toast after toast, and drank again and again to the health of both of the “blossoms.”

At last, much to the relief of Sir Peter, who had been “throwing off,” the old baronet gave in, having all aboard which he could carry to bed with him—and then the commodore found himself free for action.

Going to the room which had been prepared for his sleeping-chamber, he dismissed his servants, with orders not to disturb him; and then, watching a chance to slip, unobserved, into the wing, where Simon Wood lay, did so. This was easily effected, as it was now night.

Closeted with that precious villain, he was soon enabled to perfect his scheme for carrying out his intention of probing the “mystery” which Simon could not unravel, to the very bottom. One after another, some half-dozen of the most sure and trusty men attached to the castle were called in, without any notice being given to attract outside attention; and when they were assembled, their orders were given, and they were so implicitly obeyed, that at the hour of midnight, John Diver, who had been decoyed from the village by a pretended messenger from Jennie, found himself bound and gagged, in the presence of Sir Peter Parker.

Simon Wood was also in the room, besides several attendants who were ready to do the bidding of their master, Sir Peter, whatever it might be; and John Diver would have gladly found himself anywhere else, just at that time!

“Well, traitor! what have you to say for yourself? Why should I not hang you up like a vile, treacherous dog as you are?” said Sir Peter, after the gag was removed, with a look habitually so stern and fierce, that John, brave as he was, quailed under it.

“Speak! for you have not five hours to live!—I mean to hang you up for an example!”

“What have I done, Sir Peter, to deserve death?” said John, while his face paled, and his lip quivered.

“Insolent! How dare you to ask me such a question? Down on your knees, and confess all, or I’ll have you flogged half to death before I hang you!”

“Begging your pardon, Sir Peter, if I am to die, there is but *One* whom I will kneel to on earth, and that is He who will at His judgment-seat hold us all accountable for our actions here, and the motives which influenced them, and who will judge even judges!”

“I want no preaching here! I look in vain for contrition upon your part, and equally in vain may you look for mercy on mine. Both you and Jennie Rollison, your accomplices in treason, shall pay the penalty with your lives!”

“Sir Peter,” said Diver, gathering courage the more desperate his case seemed, “I beg that you will spare that poor young girl. She is innocent of all crime, except that of loving her young mistress but too well, and obeying her but too blindly. For myself, I ask neither mercy nor favor; but for her youth’s sake—for her old father’s sake, spare her!”

“It is useless to plead for her—by her own confession she is guilty. And you seem to care much more for her life than she did for yours, when, to preserve herself, she did not hesitate to reveal all your treason!”

A look of anguish passed over the face of the unhappy fisherman. Then an expression of incredulity followed.

“I cannot believe that she was so base!” he said. “So cruel as to betray one who would willingly die for her!”

A cold and mocking smile rested on the countenance of the commodore, as he replied:

“She is far more anxious for life, then, than you are! Perhaps Captain Seawaif did not pay her so high as he did you!”

“Yes, he did—he gave us each the same,” said Diver, thrown off his guard by the apparent knowledge which Sir Peter exhibited.

“Well, it matters not—you both received the price of treason from him, and now you shall receive its reward from me!”

“Sir Peter, we are not so guilty as you think, perhaps. As I yet live, and fear not to die, upon my only hope of heaven, I swear that neither I nor she dreamed that the schooner was an American, until after I had run her into Bracelet Cove and anchored her!”

“Ah! she is *there*, is she?” almost shouted the commodore, for he could not control his mad joy at the thought of having such a prize as she would be, in a trap.

John Diver groaned in bitter agony, for low he saw that he had been entrapped into a confession; and that not until he told of it, was the commodore aware of the vicinity of the schooner.

“This will do for the present, Mr. John Diver!” said Sir Peter, exultingly. “This will do for the present. You have piloted the schooner into a splendid harbor, where I shall not disturb her for the present, at any rate. But it is very doubtful if she ever goes out of it under the American flag. I can understand now why my niece and Dorset’s “blossom” were out *walking* when I arrived. They may want to walk still more! I shall not hinder them at present; but before long, their walks shall be circumscribed most effectually!”

“At least, Sir Peter, do not let them and Jennie believe I have willingly or knowingly betrayed them!” said John Diver, in agony. “It is enough that I meet the fate which that which you call my *treason* will bring upon me, without having to think that they will look upon me as a kind of second Judas!”

“Gag him again, and convey him to the most secure dungeon in the castle!” said Sir Peter. “Simon Wood, see to it yourself—then return with these men! Messengers must secretly be dispatched to London and to my ship in the Thames with all speed. These rebels have intruded upon our hospitality secretly, but they shall enjoy it publicly.”

It was after midnight when poor John Diver was hurried down into a dungeon, there heavily ironed and secured by a chain to the wall, and then left to the solitude of his own misery.

CHAPTER XCVI.

While Simon Wood and his men were absent, taking care of John Diver, Sir Peter had hurriedly written three dispatches; and when they came back, he selected three of the most intelligent men, and the most trusty there. Bidding Wood get a full purse of gold for each, with which to defray their expenses, he handed one a dispatch, and said:

“This is for the King—it must be given to him in person. Take the best horse in the stable, and ride him at his utmost speed until he gives out. Then hire a buy another, but do not draw rein or pause until you are in London!”

To the second, he said:

“Take that paper to the Lord of the Admiralty. Do you as I have told the man who goes to the king!”

To the third he handed the dispatch, bidding him ride with the same speed to the mouth of the Thames, and not to pause until the paper was in the hands of the commanding officer of the Bristol.

These orders given, he dismissed all the men but his couriers, giving them the strictest orders in regard to secrecy, and then went with the former himself to the stables to see them mounted, and to pass them through the gate, unknown even to the porter—for there was no very strict watch or ward kept there then.

After his messages were off, the commodore breathed more freely, and returned with a light step and rapidly to the room of Simon Wood.

“Well!” said he, as he took his seat there. “The audacity of this rebel, Seawaif, exceeds anything that I ever heard or dreamed of in my life. Not satisfied with passing his vessel off as a British war-schooner, and in a British uniform winning the love of my niece and ward at Bermuda, but he must come here, right under the walls of my castle, to carry on his suit. But his race is run, if we can only prevent his taking the alarm within the next four days. In that time or in less, his retreat shall be cut off; and then I’ll end his ambitious and daring career. If he does not fall in a vain and useless resistance, he shall dance at the end of a rope, as sure as my name is Peter Parker. He has too long been “the terror of the coast,” and too often escaped by skill or bravery from our cruisers. Give me

but four days delay, and he shall not escape again.”

“To insure his remaining here until your assistance comes, it will be best to have no watch whatever kept on the young ladies. Will it not, Sir Peter?” suggested Wood.

“It is my intention that none shall be kept!” replied the commodore. “They may have ‘full swing at their cables,’ for the little time that is left to them.”

“Had not you as well as myself, Sir Peter, better pretend to be a little unwell, or at least so fatigued with your rapid journey, that you are unable to leave the castle or join the ladies in their exercise?”

“It hardly seems to me that such trouble is necessary,” replied the commodore.

“Miss Lizzie is keen as a thorn, sir!” said the agent. “And that Jennie is about the smartest girl that ever danced a jig!”

“I shall look her up.”

“I fear that would ruin all your plans, Sir Peter. Were the young ladies to lose their agent and go-between, their plans would all be disarranged; and I feel sure that they would take the alarm.”

“So they might—so they might!” said the commodore. “I don’t know but that your plan is the best after all. I can the more easily conceal my feelings by keeping within doors, until I have the rebels in my net.”

“I am sure you can, sir!” said Wood, who, in designing as well as executing villainy, was a perfect adept—a master of the art.

“Well, it shall be done, and you will remain in your room, also. I will send for your accounts, and busy myself over them, and keep Sir Humphrey amused. Do you think he knows anything of this matter?”

“I am sure he does not, sir. I tested him fully last night. It was rather a hard matter to get enough liquor down him to throw him entirely off his balance—but I succeeded; and I am confident that he knows nothing beyond what I found out—nothing whatever of the vicinity of the schooner.”

“Then all is right; and if fortune attends us, I see nothing but plain sailing ahead.”

The commodore now returned unseen to his room; and with the close of his day, we’ll also end the chapter.

CHAPTER XCVII.

Yes; love is blind sometimes—blind as an owl in the day-time—blind to all danger, and everything but the one thing which it worships! For one week, lulled into security by the lack of watchfulness, and the supposed illness of Simon Wood and Sir Peter Parker, both of whom played their parts admirably, both Lizzie and Venona enjoyed their walks and interviews without fear or interruption.

They met on the morning of the eighth day, however, for the purpose of parting; for Seawaif had already stayed longer in port than he had intended; and he began to feel that it was his duty to be at sea again—a duty demanded by his country, and by the patriot owner of the vessel. Moreover, he felt that, by so long a stay in a port, where some wandering fishing craft might discover him, and reporting, soon bring a hostile fleet down upon him, that he was trifling with the safety of his brave and devoted crew.

Therefore, on the evening previous, he had announced, not only to his officers and crew, that he should sail the next day, but had appointed that morning as the one which should, for the present at least, terminate the happy interviews which he and Morley had held with those whom they loved with such tenderness and truth.

The hour was early on that day when they met; the sun had not risen when the officers reached the trysting-place; but the girls were already there—both sad and unhappy with the thought of the parting which *must* come. Their words came slowly from their lips; for they were burdened with grief—and such words travel all the slower that their cause comes so swift and sure.

Suddenly, Lizzie, whose eyes, first swimming in tears, had sought the face of her lover, turned them away to glance over the sea, where his trackless course would lie, and as she did so, a low, wailing moan of agony broke from her lips.

“Oh Heaven! you are lost!” she groaned. “Look there!”

A single glance told Seawaif that his chances were more than desperate. Outside of the little cove, hove to and ready with their great

frowning broadsides to attack him the moment he offered to leave the port, lay two line-of-battle-ships and three heavy frigates, each undoubtedly containing, apart from its weight of metal, a crew more than quadruple his own.

"We are in a net!" he said, while his face blanched, not with fear for himself, but with the thought that the heretofore brilliant success which had made his very name a terror on that coast, and upon every sea where he had sailed, must now be darkened by misfortune—for it was hoping against hope to think for an instant that he could escape from such a blockade.

"What will you do?" moaned poor Lizzie, while Venona laid her head upon the shoulder of Morley, and wept in silence.

"Fight—fight, while a plank of my good craft sticks to another—fight while life lasts, and die true to you and my native land!" he said, with a calmness which the desperate thought rendered only the more terrible to her.

"Oh, it is dreadful!" she whispered. "Can you not escape inland, and save yourself?"

"Individually I might; but I would die a thousand deaths, by the most cruel tortures, before I would purchase life with dishonor. I cannot, will not desert my brave crew."

At that moment, a gun was fired from one of the ships.

"Our old friend, the Bristol, speaks to us, Morley!" said Seawaif.

"Yes, sir; I recognized her at the first glance!" replied the other.

At that instant, a heavy report sounded from the landward side of them. It was a cannon answering the signal from the ship.

"We are beset by land as well as sea!" said Seawaif, when he heard this. "Our case is indeed a desperate one—but we must hurry on board, for the crew already show that they are alarmed."

Hurried adieux were given and taken; and the young officers hastened from the side of the young ladies—while the sound of bugles and rolling drums told them of the approach of a force from the direction of the castle. Chained to the spot by their sympathies and terrors, the poor girls, with hand clasped in hand, in speechless agony, sank down upon the gray rocks, and prayed to the God of battles to spare those whom they loved.

In a very few moments after he had left them, Seawaif reached the deck of his vessel. The alarmed crew, who knew from word brought by a boat which Doolittle had sent to the entrance of the cove, on hearing the gun, what lay outside of them, anxiously looked at face of their beloved leader to know from its expression what he meant to do. They saw but one look there, and as it told them that he meant to resist to the last, a thundering cheer rolling from their lips, told him that he would not stand alone while a single one of them survived.

"I thank you, men!" he replied. "We are in a tight place—but it is not the first time that we've been in one. We will do our duty, and trust in God for the rest!"

And he at once made his preparations for defence, according to a plan which he had already formed.

Detailing a part of the crew for that purpose, he hastily landed a quantity of arms, ammunition, provisions, and the money and valuables of the vessel upon points of the shore where he could make a final stand, and he so far beneath the shelter of the rocks that he could not be harmed from above. He knew that he could defend the narrow pathway, which led down the cliffy side of the hill, against a force twenty times his own.

"We can at least hold out until they consent to our surrender upon honorable terms, if we do lose the schooner!" he said to Morley, as he gave the orders to do this work.

He now sent the doctor to a secure place among the rocks to establish his hospital—remarking, as he did so, that he would probably have plenty of amputating to do now.

"And some fight, too, I hope, mon cher capitaine!" said the worthy surgeon, with a grim smile; and he touched the huge rapier by his side, and pointed to a couple of pistols in his belt, to show that he was ready to do his duty in every way.

Springs were now got upon the cables of the schooner, and her broadsides so laid that they would bear on the entrance, through which they came, and along the other channel, if boats made the attack; and boarding nettles were triced up. Every preparation

was made which could be thought of to defend the vessel to the last extremity. And to show what he meant to do in that extremity, Seawaif, with his own hands, prepared a train, which communicated with the magazine.

All of the crew that were not actually required to work the guns on board, were now sent on shore; and though he begged not to be sent from the side of his commander, Morley was ordered to command them.

Seawaif, as the young officer went into his boat, had a small chest brought out of the cabin and put into it.

"Take care of that, Eugene!" said he, "and should I fall and you survive, keep it for my sake until it can be placed in her hands. It contains a articles which were found with me when I was cast a helpless babe upon the shore, and a statement of the time and all the facts made by the good old man Zane. There is some money there also, which may be of service to you if you are taken prisoner."

Morley wrung his hand, but could not speak a reply.

"Go—go, my dear boy, and do your duty ashore, while I do mine on board!" said Seawaif, grasping him warmly by the hand, and then pointing to the shore.

"Nail every flag to the mast-head. They shall never come down while a spar stands of the schooner floats!" cried the young captain.

And amid the cheers of his fearless and devoted crew, it was done.

"We are ready for work!" he said, "I wish they would open the ball!"

Scarcely had he spoken, when, as if they had been brought there by magic, the lofty cliffs and rocky heights above him seemed to be completely covered with soldiers.

He knew that he was in reach, though at a long range, of their musketry; but he was confident that they could not depress any of their artillery sufficiently to bring it to bear upon him.

In a short time, a boat was seen coming in from the fleet outside, and as it bore a white flag, Seawaif sprang into another boat and went to meet it; for he was too old a hand, young as he was, to permit an enemy to see his means or plans of defence under the cover of a flag, or any other pretence.

To his surprise—for he had believed the commodore to be sick in bed—he recognized in one of two officers in the boat, Sir Peter Parker.

"Good morning, Captain Seawaif!" said the latter, with stern courtesy, as he raised his cap. "We have met once more."

"Yes, sir!" replied Seawaif, "and nearer to your home than before. May I know why I am honored so far as to be visited by you under that emblem of peace, rather than the meteor-flag of war?" and he pointed to the truce-signal.

"Yes, sir. Wishing to save the effusion of blood, and to spare the lives of brave men, who must fall if they resist hopelessly, as they will in this case, I came to ask your unconditional surrender."

"You came upon a useless errand, sir. We will not surrender; but if we must, sell our lives as dearly as we can!"

"Why, sir, you are mad! Two full regiments are inland to cut off your retreat, should you attempt such madness, and five heavy ships await you outside. If you refuse to surrender, they will warp in until their broadsides are brought to bear, and you will be sunk at your anchors!"

"Very well, sir; if it is so to be, it will be! But we will go down with our colors flying!"

"I regret it. Brave men's lives should not be sacrificed in that way!" said the commodore, sadly. "If you will surrender, I will treat you all as prisoners of war; and, as for yourself personally, I will strive to gain your release from those who are in power."

Seawaif shook his head, and replied, calmly:

"I thank you, sir, for your courtesy, but I have a duty to perform, which must be done! I cannot and will not, on any conditions, strike my flag."

"Then Heaven have mercy upon you! for I can do and say no more!" said the baronet, sadly; and he gave orders to his boatmen to pull back.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

In about a half hour after the boat containing Sir Peter Parker had retired, the head spars of one of the huge seventy-fours could

be seen slowly appearing across the entrance of the channel. No sail was set, and she was evidently being warped into position. And almost at the same time, another one of them was seen slowly gliding into position upon the other side of the rock which keyed the entrance.

"Fire, men, just as soon as your guns bear so that they can do any damage," said Seawaif. "There is no use in our standing upon ceremony now. Fire low, and try and send your shot between wind and water. We'll try and get the worth of our schooner out of 'em, at any rate."

"There goes my compliments to 'em!" said Mr. Brownell, as he sent a thirty-two-pound shot from his long Tom right into the bows of the ship—and as she was but a little over pistol shot distance, it went through and through her.

"Nobly done!" said Seawaif; "heave in the cold iron, my men—the more smoke we raise about ourselves, the less chance they'll have to take aim at us."

With a wild cheer, the crew replied; and as gun after gun came to bear, the whole little battery of eight guns on a side went into action, with a spirit which must have astonished the English, for it was some time before they could answer with the proper courtesies of war. At last they opened, however; but as now they had only a cloud of smoke to fire at, they shot higher than the mark, overshooting, as they did, in almost every action during the war. Thus, while the spars of the fated schooner came tumbling down at almost every broadside, the hull received scarcely any damage, and the crew escaped wonderfully on board, except from bruises by the falling spars, or causes of that kind.

His guns having been depressed from the start, the fire which Seawaif returned with tireless spirit was terribly destructive on board of the English ships; and actually within a half hour from the commencement of the action, the ship which had first opened was completely silenced for a time, either because she was in danger of sinking, or else her guns had been dismounted.

Thinking that the enemy might intend boarding in the smoke, with boats from all their ships; and knowing now that with his schooner entirely dismantled, he could in no way escape, Seawaif ordered his crew to land as rapidly as possible, with their small arms in the boats, which he had caused to be drawn up in safety close under the stern, though he still kept up a steady fire, so as to conceal his movements from the enemy.

At last, all of the crew except those who manned a single gun on either side, were on shore; and then, seeing that the train was ready, Seawaif ordered them into the boats, lighted a slow match connected with the train, and carrying the colors of his vessel with him, was himself the last to leave her.

Having reached the shore, and covered his men as much as possible in their natural fortifications, he watched the schooner intently—for as the smoke slowly rose from her, he began to fear that the enemy would take possession before the magazine was fired, and that her yet sound hull and valuable battery would become their prize. For they, on noticing that her fire had ceased, had also stopped firing, supposing that she had surrendered, and only waiting for the smoke to rise, so that she could be discovered, and the fact known, in order to send an officer to take charge of her.

Slowly the sulphurous veil lifted from over the black hull of the doomed vessel, and Seawaif began to fear that his match had gone out, or something had happened which had frustrated his design. His heart quivered with regret as he saw a boat from the Bristol dashing toward the schooner—but a second later, his bosom was filled with exultation, for with a report which shook the rocky hills from crest to base, the gallant craft was lifted in a thousand fragments from the water.

"O Heaven! ze schoonare 'ave make a great deal of noise while she exist, but nevere so much as when she depart!" said the doctor, who was busy in attending to the wounded men, whom Seawaif had brought on shore.

Seawaif now run his colors up on a small flag-staff which he had brought on shore, to show the foe that he had not surrendered, nor was yet conquered; and again the cheers of his noble crew went ringing over the waters.

"Ah! *bonne* hearts—good boys—ze John Bull mens will nevere say zat ze Yankees are

cowards from this day!" cried the delighted La Motte.

Firing, as of musketry, was now heard in rattling volleys at the point where Seawaif had barricaded the single path which led to the water-side; and he knew that the soldiers had entered into the amusements of the day, and meant to make an attack in the rear.

But the young captain had no fear about that point of his position. It was such, that ten men, almost perfectly protected, could defend it against a thousand, or all, at least, who could attack at once; and he had directed Mr. Morley to place a barrel of gunpowder beneath the rocks in one place, so that, if the enemy reached that spot, it could be ignited by a train, and not only carry destruction to the foe, but render the approach almost or altogether impassable.

As the smoke once more lifted, he could see somewhat of the damage which his heavy fire had inflicted upon the enemy. The lower parts of the Bristol, or rather the sides of the ship between them, were knocked entirely away for almost half her length—the lack of guns in them showed that many pieces had been dismounted, and the water which poured from her scuppers told that they were hard at work at their pumps to keep her from sinking.

From the condition of both the English vessels, it was evident that they had lost a great many men. But Seawaif knew that this would only excite the rest to revenge; and as the other three ships had not been in action at all, he might expect every moment an attack by an immensely superior force of fresh men in boats.

But the fearful odds, and his desperate position, did not cause him for an instant to quail. Calmly he stationed his men, where they could be best protected from the fire of the enemy; and as he had at least two muskets to a man, he ordered both to be loaded, and the second so placed, that it could be instantly seized after the first fire; and thus a discharge, at first, would be given as deadly as with a united force from double his number.

This done, he and Mr. Doolittle, who had acted nobly all the day, went from man to man, and spoke words of encouragement, which were received by cheers, while the stewards and cabin-boys followed with buckets of grog, from which each man received a stimulating draught, to strengthen him for the next struggle.

CHAPTER XCIX.

At last, slowly, but in an immense mass, which fairly covered the water at either entrance, the boats of the united squadron were seen, filled with seamen and marines. There were not less than sixteen or eighteen hundred men gathered there to attack the less than two hundred and fifty of Seawaif. But the latter had every advantage of a formidable position, and with a Spartan courage, they waited for the onslaught.

"Not a shot must be fired until I give the order!" cried the young American. "And then take deliberate aim, and fire low. If we can keep them busy till dark, we may yet get away in our boats!"

The enemy approached slowly for a time, then, after they saw themselves within range, they gave a loud, wild cheer, and dashed on to the assault.

Behind their rocky ramparts the Americans remained as still as death—not a sound could be heard there but the click of their gunlocks, or the rattle of the barrels, as they leveled them at a rest, upon the rocks, and took a sure and deadly aim at the boats which came from two directions, but could be met by raking fires from two ways also, by Seawaif's men.

On—they came, until they were only a pistol-shot away; and then, with a voice as clear as a bugle, Seawaif gave the order to fire. A single flash—one fearful, rattling roar along the whole American line, told (as it did at New Orleans, in 1814) a fearful tale among the crowded masses of the enemy. The second guns were seized, and within a half-minute more, another volley, even more destructive than the first, was poured in. The boats were checked; and though a few scattered shots were fired in return, the terrible confusion among them told, that not only many men had been killed, but probably the leading officers—for no one seemed to know what to do.

Loading and firing at will, and as fast as

possible, the Americans kept such an unceasing fire that the enemy was forced to withdraw from range before another attack could be arranged.

"Ah—ha—I sink Monsieur John Bull will consider zat ze schoonere is one very grand expense to heem!" cried the doctor, who had seized a musket, and done his part with that instrument during the attack.

Seawaif now began to feel some concern, in consequence of his ammunition being scarce—for so much had not been brought on shore as he had ordered, and he learned with regret that there were not more than three charges to a man. But he did not for a moment think of a surrender, while he had a charge left; and though he saw that, reinforced by more boats and men, the enemy were about to make another effort to storm his position, he did not falter, but issued his orders as before—only ordering his men to be very careful not to throw away a single shot, but to make each one "tell."

The enemy again moved on, and all was once more as still as death in the American lines by the water-side, but a rapid fire up the hill-side, by the barricaded pathway, told that Morley was hotly engaged.

The boats were about as near as they had been before, and Seawaif had just given the order, "ready," when, with a tremendous shock the mine which Morley had prepared above for his protection was sprung, hurling men and rocks high in the air, and so astonishing the men in the boats, that for an instant they involuntarily stopped rowing, and fell into some confusion.

Fatal for them, and excellent for Seawaif, was this event; for again his double volley was poured into them with such fearful effect, that in spite of that dauntless courage for which British seamen are famed, and which in too many wars they have exhibited to be sneered at, they again fell back. But it was not their intention to give up the attack. They were seen again forming; and now, having scarce a single load a piece for his guns, and having defended himself as long as honor, and longer than duty demanded, he began to think of making an effort to save the lives of the men who had stood by him so daringly, and with such complete devotion.

Although he still kept his own colors flying, he hastily snatched a white flag—it happened to be the very one Kate Cringle had embroidered for him, from among some things he had sent on shore from his cabin, and hoisting it on a boat-hook, sprung into a boat, and pushing off a little way, waited for a reply from the enemy—though he doubted whether, under the circumstances, they would notice a flag at all.

For some time they did not seem inclined to do so, but kept forming their boats for another attack; and Seawaif was about to lower his little flag, and to return—determined to dispute the victory with cold steel to the last gasp—when a single boat dashed away from the side of the Bristol, with a "flag" and several officers in it.

Seawaif recognized Sir Peter Parker long before the boat reached him; and saw, also, that he had an arm in a sling, and, by his pallor, exhibited the signs of having received a wound.

"Well, sir!" he said, severely. "After your mad folly in resisting such an overwhelming force, you begin to see the uselessness of resistance, do you?"

"I have not ceased to resist, nor shall I, without I can be assured of terms which I can accept with honor to myself and justice to my men, who are ready to die by my side, if I so will them to!" replied Seawaif.

"What are you doing in possession of that coat-of-arms?" cried the commodore, in surprise, as he pointed to the little silken flag.

"I have reason to suppose it is the coat-of-arms of the family from which I sprung, sir; for I have plate and jewelry with the same marks on them, found with me when I was cast ashore a babe, from a wreck!" said Seawaif; and a wild thought rushed like an electric shock through his heart and to his brain, that he was upon the eve of a discovery which he had dreamed of all his life.

"A babe from a wreck—O Heaven! it cannot be—they are the Egerton arms!" gasped the commodore, seeming astounded with surprise.

"The Egerton arms?" cried Seawaif, in astonishment. "And Sir Humphrey Dorset has so often said in every look that I was an Egerton!"

"In looks you may resemble that family.

sir," said Sir Peter, recovering his self-possession, "but none of that family would rebel against their king! But we have no time to discuss such matters—that can be done hereafter, if you will not, by your continued rashness, destroy every chance of any hereafter on earth for yourself!"

"That will rest with you, Sir Peter! Make your demands—if they are compatible with my honor, I will accept them; if not, I am ready to perish sword in hand, with the knowledge that your victory will yet be bought with terrible loss, much as you have already suffered!"

"I demand your unconditional surrender!"

"I will surrender only upon your promise to treat my men and officers as prisoners of war. For myself, I ask nothing—but they must be open for exchange, and receive the treatment which brave men deserve at the hand of a generous enemy!"

Sir Peter held a low and hurried consultation with his officers. At its conclusion, he said:

"Your terms shall be granted—not because you deserve them, but too much blood has been shed to-day, already! I will go on shore with you, and receive your flag, which I will do you the justice to say, you have defended with a desperate zeal, worthy of a better cause.

The firing on the hill-side had been suspended during this interview, and it was not renewed again, for the combatants could see that some peaceful arrangement had been made between Seawaif and the commodore.

When the Americans learned the terms which Seawaif had gained for them, they acquiesced in a surrender; for they knew that, in the end, they would have been overwhelmed or starved out, even if the English had not made another attack.

The doctor was the maddest of all.

"Nevare—nevare shall ze John Bull mens take my sword!" he cried. And he tossed it out far into the deep water; and then, with a look of settled gloom, turned to conclude an operation which he was performing upon a wounded man.

CHAPTER C.

The situation and feelings of poor Lizzie Egerton and Venona Dorset during this terrible conflict, can be better imagined than described. They had at first sunk down in agony and terror where their lovers had left them; then, hearing the approach of the soldiers, had crept close to the front of the cliff, where, concealed by the bushes and rocks, they remained unseen by any of the troops—though some came very near to them—and from which they could plainly see the schooner while she was being prepared for action, and the ships as they were warped in to attack her. And breathlessly they viewed those preparations; yet even so much as they feared for the safety of those whom they loved, they could not but exult amid their tremblings at the chivalric daring which did not fear to meet and contend with such an overwhelming force.

They saw every movement upon both sides, until the clouds of smoke enveloped the vessels, boats, and men, and made the air up where they were, almost insufferable for them to breathe.

And then they knew an anxiety which it were only possible to imagine, not to describe. After the firing ceased, they felt almost sure that the American schooner must either have been sunk or had surrendered; but as the smoke-cloud slowly rolled up above their heads, they saw that, though deserted, she was still above water.

Then, while they were looking at the flag which floated above Seawaif and his brave men, down almost beneath their feet, they heard and felt the shock of the explosion, and saw that the brave American had kept his promise, never to yield his vessel to the foe.

Then they saw the preparations for the boat-attack, and trembled yet the more; for they could not believe that Seawaif could successfully resist such an immense force as was gathering to attack him. But they saw its advance, its reception, its confusion and retreat; and like men who, once in action, lose the fear they felt at first, the girls, growing less timorous, also exulted more and more in the bravery and success of the Americans, with whom their every sympathy was centered.

After the boats were a second time repulsed, they began actually to hope that the Americans would triumph in the end; for to them, who knew but little of war, its arts, exigencies, and chances of failure, the Spartan band

seemed to be invulnerable and unconquerable.

But when they saw Seawaif go forth with the white flag, their hearts sunk, and they felt that all was over. And when they saw the commodore, whom they recognized, go on shore after the conference, and saw the flag which had been so bravely defended hauled down, they felt that all was indeed over: and they wept tears of bitter grief.

"They are prisoners now—what will become of them?" moaned Venona.

"Heaven only knows!" sobbed Lizzie. "The nobleness of their defence will only the more endanger them—our government, so far, has shown no generosity to her brave enemies—all has been cruelty—base, relentless cruelty! I know not what will be their fate!"

"I can tell you, lady!" said a cold, sneering voice close behind them.

It was that of Simon Wood, who had crept closely to them while their attention was engaged by the scenes below.

"I can tell you," said he. "The men may be spared, but the rebel officers will be hanged!"

"Not as spies, as you ought to be, varlet!" said Lizzie, bitterly. Then turning to Venona, she said: "We have seen enough here, and will now go back to the castle!"

"If the ladies will accept my escort, I shall be but too happy!" said the unabashed villain. "There are many rude soldiers about, who may not be over polite!"

"We require no escort, and can protect ourselves!" said Venona, indignantly. "I am not asleep now!"

And they hurried away, leaving Mr. Wood rather confused.

"Not asleep now!" he said to himself, in a bitter tone. "No, fair devil, no; nor is my passion asleep! I'll tame your haughty spirit by-and-by. If I can urge Sir Peter to the extremity, your dainty eyes shall see your lover dance the dance of death, with naught beneath his feet, and hemp about his neck! Then I will not wait long to carry out a plan I've formed, and both Simon Wood and Miss Venona Dorset will be missing. Some people will believe that they have eloped together!"

CHAPTER CI.

With anxious hearts the poor girls—who now, most of all, demand our sympathies, watched to see the prisoners brought to the castle. But though they watched until night gathered, they looked in vain; for they were all conveyed to the Bristol, which was, with the other vessels, warped into the inner part of the cove, there to remain until some repairs could be made, when Sir Peter intended to go in her, to deliver his prisoners at London in person.

This they learned by a note which he addressed to Sir Humphrey, announcing the capture. While they were grieving over this announcement, they found that they were not alone in sorrow, for poor Jennie Rollison came to them, convulsed in grief, to let them know that her poor John Diver was confined in irons in a dungeon, on a charge of treason, for having piloted the schooner into a harbor.

"Who told you so?" asked Lizzie.

"Simon Wood!" sobbed the girl. "And he offered to try to save John—if—if—oh! I cannot tell you, Miss Lizzie, all that he said—I only know that it was so dreadful, that I struck him a fearful blow with a heavy glass decanter that I was cleaning for father; and I don't know but I have killed him. But I did not stop to think of that—my John is in a dungeon, and they will hang him. Oh, do, Miss Lizzie—do, Miss Venona, try to save him. Sir Peter will let him go if you will plead for him."

"We will plead for him, and take the blame upon ourselves, Jennie; do not grieve so," said Lizzie.

"Do you think you hurt that vile wretch seriously, Jennie?" asked Venona.

"I don't know how bad, miss!" said the girl. "I only know that I struck him on the side of the head very hard with the heavy decanter, and that the blood spouted out in a torrent, and he fell down on the floor. If you knew what he said to me, you wouldn't blame me—indeed you wouldn't."

"I do not blame you; I only hope you have killed him, for he is too vile to live."

"I don't care either—for if they hang my poor John, they shall hang me, too. If he dies, I don't want to live."

"Oh, dear—oh, dear—oh, dear!" moaned

the old butler, as he rushed into the room, under great excitement.

"What is the matter, father?" said Jennie, putting her lips close to her father's ear, and speaking loud—for he was quite deaf.

"Simon Wood lays in the glass-room as dead as a nail!" cried the old man. "How 'twas done I can't tell—nor who did it."

"No? It is most likely that he did it himself!" said Lizzie, giving Jennie a look which cautioned her not to betray herself. "He is but a small loss at any rate, and can very well be spared."

"Oh, dear—oh, dear—I must send word to Sir Peter about it!" said the old man; and he hobbled out of the room.

"Say not a word to any one, that you did this deed. There was no witness to it; and few love him well enough to make much search into the manner of his death!" said Lizzie to Jennie. "He cannot now be a witness against your John; and I do not believe there was any other. His death may save your lover."

"Then, indeed, I'm not sorry I struck him so hard," said Jennie, wiping her eyes with her apron. "He has insulted me before, but never quite so badly as he did this time."

CHAPTER CII.

Sir Peter Parker was in his private cabin alone with Edward Seawaif. It was the night which followed the day of the battle in which the Tyrannicide had been lost forever. Upon the face of the commodore there was an expression of wonder mixed with sorrow.

Before him on a table lay several articles of costly female apparel—several garments, such as belonged to an infant, and a quantity of valuable jewelry. Upon almost every article, the coronet and crest which he had seen upon the flag of truce, was visible. The articles were those which had been saved when Edward Seawaif was found on the shore of the Nantucket Isle, by the old hermit Zane; and in his hand Sir Peter held a carefully-written account of the date when the chest came ashore, and every other particular about its preservation.

He had also heard from Seawaif's lips all that he knew of the matter.

The baronet was sorely troubled.

"In my mind," said he, "there is no doubt that you are the child which was christened Francis Egerton, the only son of Lord Ethelbert Egerton; and if so, and not attainted of treason, you would now be heir to the earldom and estates. In that year, Lady Egerton sailed with her only child, to join her husband, who held a high official station in Canada. The vessel in which she sailed was never heard of, after she had parted from a consort in a severe storm near the American coast, and then she was in a sinking condition. If, as some children have, you had any strange birth-marks upon you, such as nurses always look for, and are apt to remember, you may be fully identified; for the nurse who attended at the birth of that babe, is yet living in the castle—for she had a dread of the sea, which prevented Lady Egerton from taking her on that voyage!"

"If it is so," said Seawaif, sadly, "Miss Lizzie Egerton is my sister?"

"Your half-sister!" replied Sir Peter. "The earl married again, after living a widower such time as left him fully convinced that his first wife and child had been lost. But he always grieved after them; and both his second wife and himself died soon after Lizzie was born. I have been her guardian, and so far as I could be, a father to her. But about this identity—have you any strange marks about your person?"

"Yes, sir—one so singular, that a nurse would hardly overlook or forget it—I have six toes, instead of the usual five, on each foot!"

"Wonderful! Lord Egerton had the same, and I now distinctly remember, that it was said his child was born with the same mark. Without a doubt in my mind, you are Francis, Lord Egerton. Oh, had you not been engaged in this rebellion, how bright would be your prospects now! The immense estates, the title, and the position, second to none in the realm, at your age, and with your courage and gifts, would have made you the envy of the world."

"Sir Peter, enviable as that position seems to you, I would rather be simply Edward Seawaif, a rebel, as you term me, and free this night, ready still to resist the power of tyranny

than to hold it. My feelings and sympathies are all with America—I have known no other native land, though now it seems that I was born here."

"I do not know that I can blame you. But this war will not last long: America will be free, and peace will be declared. Some of our strongest minds in this nation are against the war. The king will yet have to yield to popular feeling; for day after day the war grows more and more unpopular. Its success is a few—its expenses draw heavily upon England, both for men and money. There will be peace before long; but, alas! I fear that you will not live to see it. I fear that the king will insist upon making an example of you, without you will now, as an English earl, side with us, and throw your strong arm and mind upon our side."

"Not to save a thousand lives would I do that, Sir Peter. I have but one favor to ask. That is, that you gently break to Miss Egerton the discovery which you have made; and when she can bear an interview with me, permit it to take place."

"It shall be as you wish!" replied Sir Peter. "My only regret is, that I cannot release you. But I will use every effort to save you; and the king would be more than ungrateful if he would not listen to the prayers of one who has served him so long and faithfully as I have! I will go on shore, and see Lizzie myself, though I did not intend to, for I was very angry with her."

CHAPTER CIII.

Nearly one eighth of Salem lay in smoking ruins. A disastrous fire had broken out in the night, and swept away many houses and stores, casting their occupants roofless on the world. Of all who suffered by this great disaster, Plancas Cringle was the greatest loser. An entire range of houses and stores, many of them filled with the cargoes of prizes taken by the schooner, were swept away.

Barely escaping with their lives, he and his daughter and servants found temporary shelter under the roof of a friend near the house of Moses Gelson. The latter had not been injured by the fire in the slightest degree—his property was out of its range.

Mr. Cringle, usually so light-hearted, was dreadfully depressed on the day after the fire. But Kate, who, with a singular and steady hopefulness, had been gradually but surely improving in health and beauty, ever since the time of her illness, did not even allow a shadow to cross her brow, but strove, with all of a daughter's love and gentleness, to cheer up his sinking heart.

"It is ever the darkest just before the dawn of day, dear father!" she said. "Be hopeful and trusting, for though you have lost the accumulation of years, yet you have life and health. Who knows what prizes are even now being sent in by Edward?"

"It's all very well to talk comfort, *et-cet-er-a*—all very well to make a speech about, and to smooth one's face on, *et-cet-er-a*—but 'tis a different thing to feel it!" said the old merchant. "There's no knowing where the schooner is. She may be as well off as my houses are—nearer heaven than earth, *et-cet-er-a*—she may be taken—bad luck never comes alone—it's like bad neighbors—they come in squads when they do come, *et-cet-er-a*!"

"There is the southern post-man coming this way, father—he bears a letter in his hand for you. Now you will see that I foretold fair weather ahead not mistakenly."

"We'll see—we'll see, *et-cet-er-a*," said the merchant, nervously extending his hand for the letter, which the post-man had signified by a sign was for him, while he was still some distance away.

The merchant hurriedly broke the seal, and cast his eyes upon the letter, which was written in the well-known hand of Edward Seawaif.

A groan burst from his lips, he turned ghastly pale, the letter dropped from his shaking hands, and he would have fallen to the floor, had not Kate thrown her arm around him and held him up.

"The schooner is lost, and Seawaif and all hands are in an English prison!" moaned the old man.

"But they have life. While there is life, there is hope—they will yet be free!" said Kate—brave, true-hearted Kate—who, though she staggered under this new blow, would not let her poor, old father see that she did.

"Read the letter, Kate—read it, and tell me

the rest; my eyes look through too thick a cloud to make the words out," said Mr. Cringle, as he tottered to a seat.

She took up the letter; and many changes passed over her face as she read it.

"He has learned who his parents were," she said. "He is by birthright an English earl; and they threaten to hang him because he will not desert the American cause. But live or die, he will not. Thank Heaven, he is true."

"Yes, Kate—yes!" said the old man, while the color came back once more—"yes, thank Heaven for that. He says he blew the schooner up before he'd let the British have her—does he not?"

"Yes, sir; and he never surrendered until his ammunition was all gone and he had slain three times his own number."

"Brave boy—brave boy! I don't care if the schooner is lost!" said the old merchant. "The British haven't got her. If he can only get away from them, I'll build him another vessel—I'll do it if—but where will I get the money?"

"I will let you have it, Phineas!" said the voice of one who had come unheralded, and who stood upon the threshold of the door.

It was Moses Gelson—the miser.

"What, you cursed old wretch!—have you come here to glory in my downfall—to triumph in my wretchedness?" cried Mr. Cringle, bitterly. "Begone from here, or I'll kill you as I would a dog that was biting me. Begone, I cannot bear the sight of you!"

"I haven't come to hurt your feelings, Phineas—I beg you to bear with me till you know what I've come for, and then you may kill me if you want to."

"You must hear him, my dear father!" said Kate, gently; and at the same time Gelson stepped within the door so as to allow his negro man—the one-legged and one-eyed individual, whom we looked at in one of our opening-scenes—to enter.

He came in, followed by two other men, and each bore a heavy and stout box upon their shoulders, which, at a sign from the miser, they deposited on the floor near the feet of the merchant, and then they retired, receiving from the miser, as they went out of the door, each a broad piece of gold.

The merchant saw this—saw Moses Gelson give gold away, and he had heard the clink of gold in those heavy boxes when they were put down. Could he believe his senses? What did it mean.

"Are you crazy, Moses Gelson?" he asked, not in a tone of anger, but one of surprise.

"Not now, Phineas—not now! But I have been for many, many years; ever since—ever since the time when you—but no, I'll not speak of that now. There are five thousand guineas in gold in these boxes; and I've brought them to you to use—they have been idle too long, and you can use them to advantage."

"Moses Gelson, what do you mean? You are mocking me!" gasped the merchant; and he looked as if he was about to faint.

"No—no—I'm not. They are yours to use as long as you wish, and *hers* after that. I have more—plenty more!" said Gelson, as he pointed to Kate.

"Five thousand guineas? And you, Moses Gelson, are willing to lend me that without security?"

"Yes; and more still, if you have use for it, Phineas."

"Heaven forgive me—Heaven forgive me! I have wronged you very much!" said Mr. Cringle. "I thought you had no heart, and have treated you heartlessly."

"The heart within me was all dried up, until your angel child dropped the dew of kindness on it. She is very like what Mary was, Phineas."

The old miser said this so gently, and there was so unusual an expression on his face, that he did not look like a miser any more. And when Kate took one of his thin hands in one of hers, and her father's in the other, and placed them together, the merchant did not draw his hand away, but said, solemnly:

"I ask forgiveness of Heaven and of you, Moses. I have been proud and hard-hearted; but my punishment has come."

"And pat ed, Phineas—and passed!" said Gelson, whose very voice, once so harsh and hoarse, seemed to have changed into softness. "Now, good bye for a little while, Phineas. I will go and clothe myself in better habiliments, so that you and your good child will not be ashamed to see me; and then, if you will, then I'll come and talk with you kindly about the past and the future. May I come again, Phineas?"

"Yes, Moses—yes. Come, and I'll treat you like a brother."

"Well, I will come after I have had my beard trimmed, and gotten me new clothes; for I wish to look and feel right once more."

And he that had been the miser, turned away, not tottering and shambling off, as he had used to do, but walking with a firm step, as if youth was coming back to him.

"I told you, dear, father, that it was always darkest just before day!" said Kate.

"Come here, Kate, come here—I want you to do something for me—I believe I'm dreaming!" said Mr. Cringle, who found it indeed difficult to believe in the reality of what had occurred.

"What can I do for you, father?"

"Just pinch me, Kate—pinch me as hard as you can, or stick a pin into me! If I'm asleep 'twill wake me up!"

Kate laughed, and bending down, did what would have almost waked a marble statue into life—kissed him with her red, luscious lips.

"Just lift one of those boxes, Kate—if there was gold there, I'm afraid it has sunk through the floor."

"I cannot lift it father," said Kate, trying.

"It is far too heavy!"

"There—it is gold! What could have made Moses Gelson change so?"

"Her memory, my dear father!" said Kate, and she showed her father the miniature which she had worn in her bosom ever since the miser had given it to her.

"Why, child, this a portrait of your dear mother! Where on earth did you get it?"

"Moses Gelson gave it to me, father, some time ago. Do you remember when I interfered and saved him from being ducked in the pond?"

"Yes, Kate—I am glad, now, that you did it; but I was angry at you for it, then?"

"Yes; I am glad, also, father—very glad; for, from that hour, he has been a changed man!"

"Heaven forgive me!—had I been more kind and considerate, the change would have come at an earlier day, perhaps!" said Mr. Cringle.

CHAPTER CIV.

The war was over! Peace had been declared! America was free—thanks to Almighty God, and through Him all praise to George Washington and her gallant sons!

In the front parlor of a house very similar to that which had been burned down and built upon the same spot, in good old Salem, sat three persons—and not one of the three looked unhappy.

One was Phineas Cringle—the next, though with a clean-shaven face, and neat-fitting, new apparel—he could hardly be recognized—was Moses Gelson, and who could the third be but our own pretty Kate?

The merchant had been perusing a letter which had just been brought by the postman, and which announced to him that Lord Francis Egerton and his sister, with other friends, would soon visit them, being about to sail in a vessel bound to Boston from England. He that had been Edward Seawaif had—through the devotion of his half-sister, Sir Peter Parker, and Sir Humphrey Dorset and his daughter, who in person had solicited the king, and brought other influences to bear—been pardoned for what was termed his rebellion, and confirmed in his title and estate.

Both of the old men expressed intense delight on hearing this news—for Phineas and Moses had become like brothers, and were

partners in business now—but Kate trembled and turned pale—she alone seemed to dread the meeting.

Suddenly, while Mr. Cringle was planning with Gelson what to do when they came, and how to receive them, a crippled hop step was heard hastily approaching the door, and Jim Gelson's old negro, now glorying in a respectable suit of clothes, appeared at the door, and said:

"Massa Gelson and Massa Cringle, dere's tree carriages jest dis minute drive up to de door—dey're all full o' white folks, dressed ever so nice!"

"They've come!—they've come—I'll wagger a cookie!" cried Mr. Cringle, and he rose and hurried to the door.

But, preceded by the porter from the store, who was showing the way, came those whom he was hurrying to meet.

"Edward Seawaif—how do you do?—I mean my lord, how do you do?" cried the merchant, as he grasped the *hero* of this story by the hand.

"Edward Seawaif, to you and yours, always and unchanged!" said the latter, as he returned the pressure, and introducing his sister, pressed forward to where poor Kate stood, half bewildered, and trembling from head to foot.

"Have you no welcome for me, Miss Kate?" he asked, almost reproachfully. "To you I probably owe my life—to you I surely am indebted for the knowledge which gave me a sister, a family and a name—for they were discovered through the means of this little flag!"

And as he said this, he drew the flag which ~~she~~ had embroidered from his bosom.

Kate looked at him one moment, staggered forward into his extended arms, and fainted.

"Here doctor—here, quick—have you not some restorative?" cried Lord Egerton, to one of the several who followed him.

"Yes, sare; but, if you please you *whisper* some kind words in ze ear of ze ladie—when zey faint, zat or one kiss is ze most effectual remedie zat exists!" said our old friend, La Motte.

Egerton—it is hard for us not to call him Seawaif—*did* whisper something in her ear, and it seemed to have an effect, for in a moment or more life seemed to come back to her, and a gush of tears came from her overloaded heart, and soon she was more calm.

Then Lord Egerton had an opportunity to introduce Mr. Morley and his lovely young wife, and her father, Sir Humphrey Dorset, as well as his own sweet sister, who, though more pale, and sad, and quiet than she had been when first knew her, looked proudly and fondly upon her brave and noble brother.

Reader, I hate to end a story so well!—I hate the common way that fashionable novelists have of leaving everybody happy! for, as a general thing, it is not life-like—is not as we find things in this tragical world. But I am inditing a historical matter, and must stick to the truth!

The love and gentleness of sweet Kate Cringle at last found a reward; for Francis Egerton, who, though he loved, could not marry his sister, had not useless eyes or a senseless heart, and he soon perceived her value, and determined to appropriate it. So, some few weeks later, Kate became his wife.

And the entire party, not excepting Doctor La Motte, pronounced themselves happy.

"If I cannot be so happy as to have more chance for amputat, I will study to be one grand *docteur régent*!" said the doctor, as he winked at Lord Egerton on the day of his marriage.

"Shall I build a ship for you—a nice trader, *et-cet-e-ra*, Mr. Doolittle?" asked Mr. Cringle, at the wedding-dinner, of the old mate.

"No, thankee, sir!" said the latter, blushing a greenish-red, through his yellow skin. "I've been down to hum, where I was born, and there's the widder Bombazine, who thinks I've been to sea long enough, and she wants me to take keer of the farm, and her, and I'm goin' tew dew it!"

Beadle's Dime Library.

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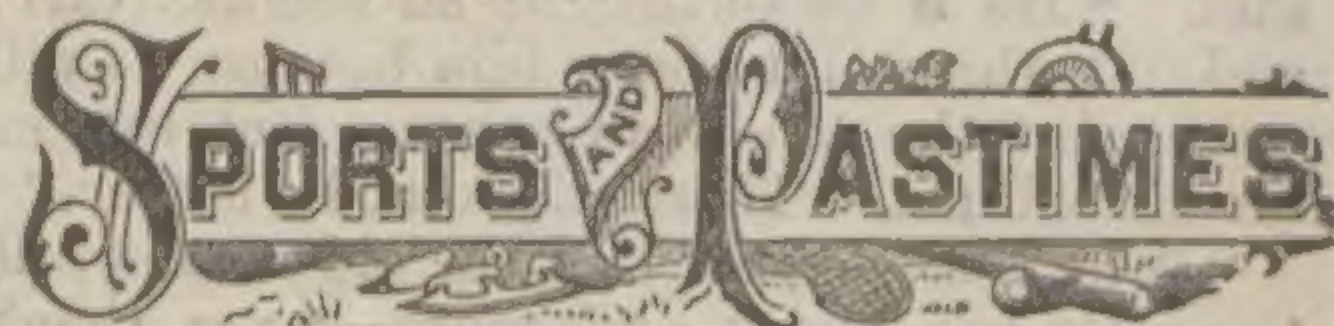
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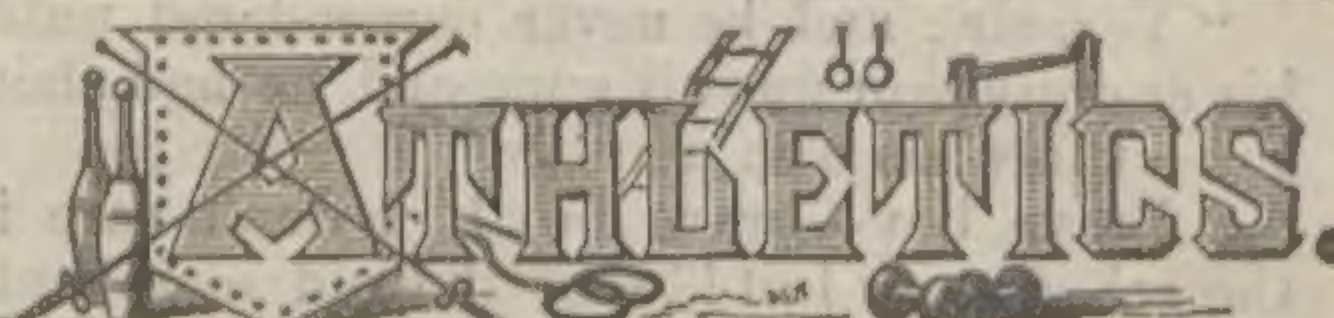


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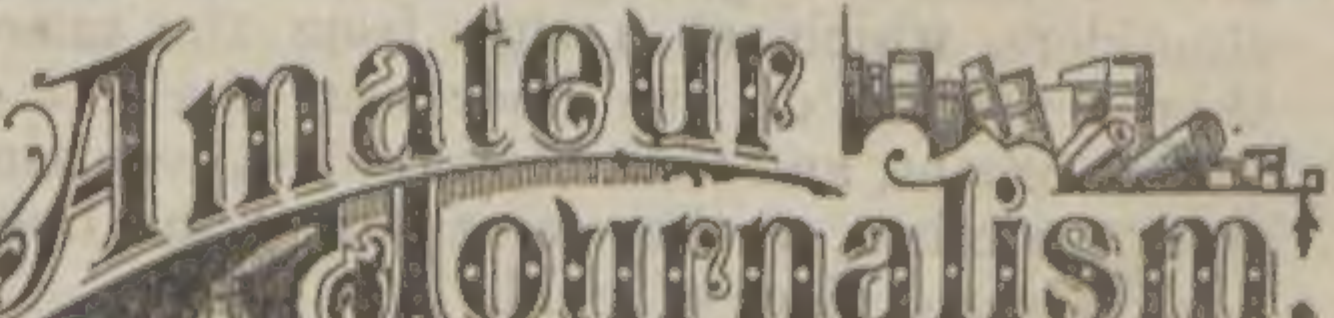
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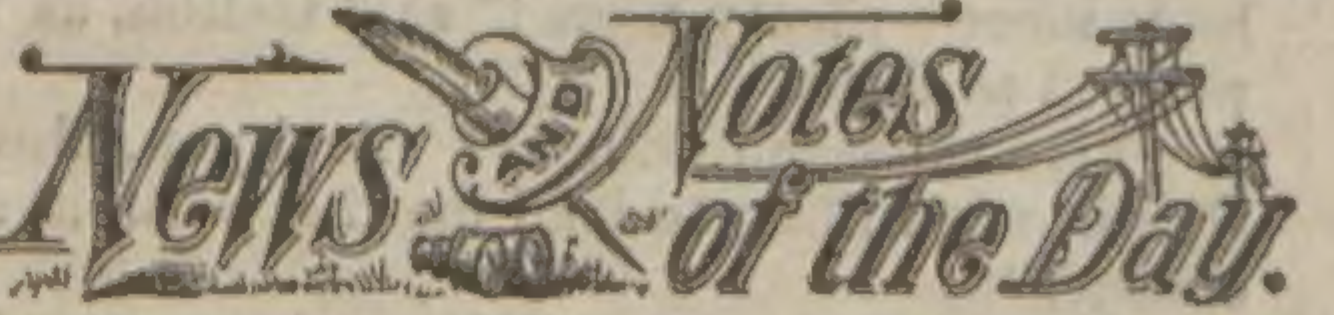
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